Pr3 32

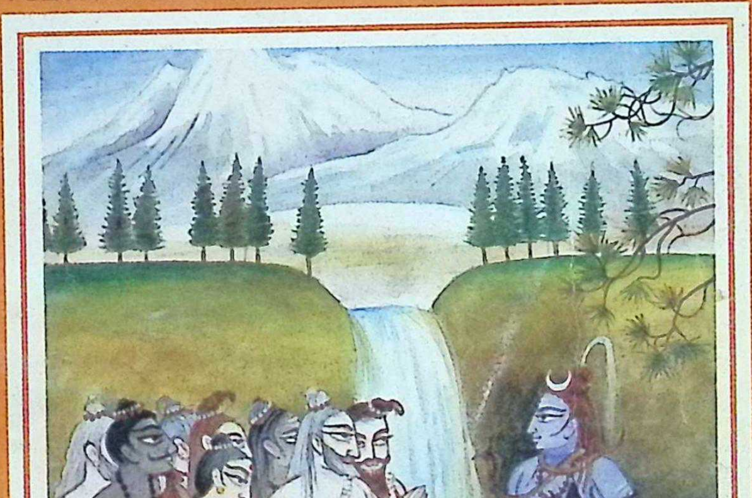
ISSN 0970-8901

Tattvāloka

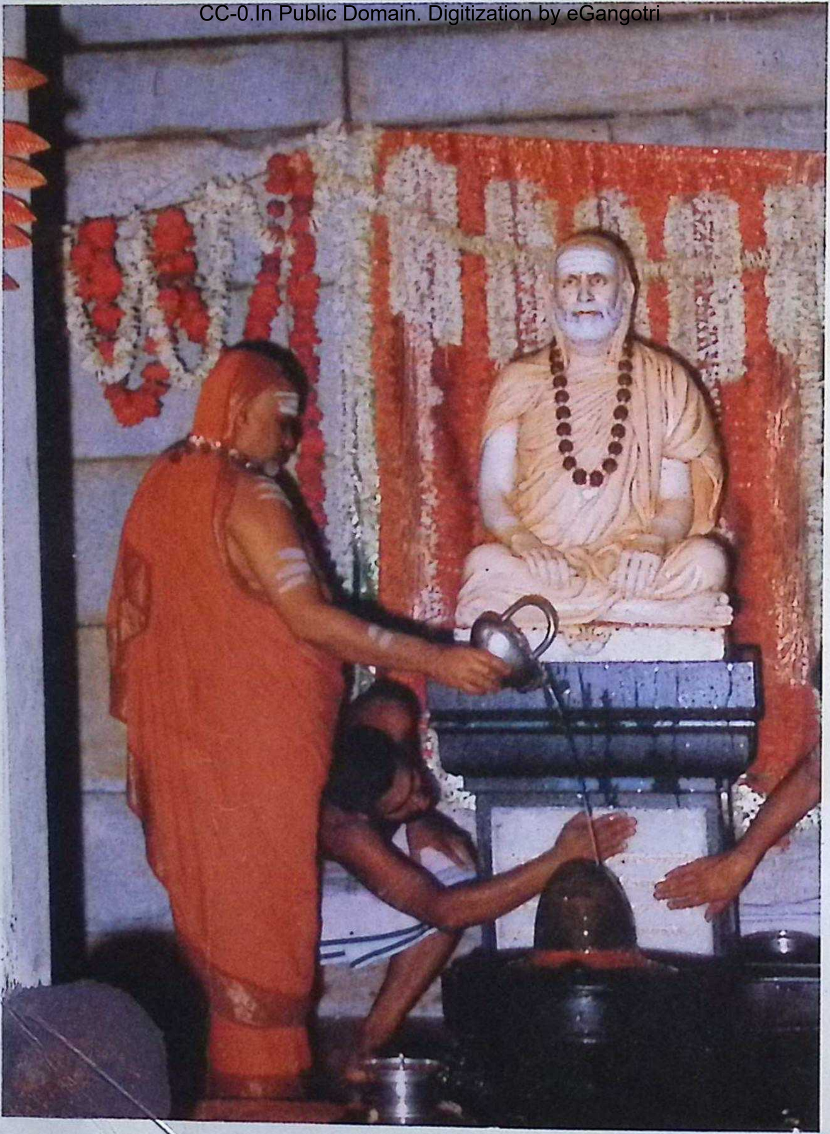
THE SPLENDOUR OF TRUTH

VOLUME XVI No. 2

JUNE/JULY 1993



A Scene from Kalidasa' s Kumarasambhava



H. H. Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal at his guru's adhishthana.

COURTESY: SONITE LIMITED, G. P. O. BOX 11526, HONG KONG

Tattvāloka
THE SPLENDOUR OF TRUTH

VOLUME XVI No. 2 JUNE/JULY 1993
125-A, Mittal Court, Nariman Point, Bombay 400 021

Founder
H. H. Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal

Patron-in-Chief
Sri Jagadguru Sankaracharya of Sringeri
His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

Editor and Publisher: *T. R. Ramachandran*
Associate Editor: *Prem Daswani*
Editorial Consultants:
Dr. Karan Singh, New Delhi
Yashwant Thorat, M. V. B. S. Sarma,
Hareesh Raja, Dr. N. B. Patil,
V. Vedanarayanan, Bombay
V. R. Gowrishankar, Sringeri
S. Krishnaswamy, Bangalore
P. R. Hariharan, Mysore
S. Sankaranarayanan, Madras
Swami Yogananda Sarasvati, Paris, France
Advertising: *P. R. Subbaraman*, Bombay
Design Consultant: *Brendan Pereira*

Overseas Liaison: *V. Panchapakesan* (5329255),
G. Viswanathan (5249276), Hong Kong
G. Srinivasan (2215800), Singapore
N. M. Sundaram,NSW(02--6428537) Australia.
Arjan Daswani (201-567-2782), NewJersey,USA
G. Warrier (01-370-2255), London, UK

Subscription: Rs.115 annual. Single copy Rs. 20
Foreign (airmail): US$25 annual.
Make cheques payable to: Tattvāloka
Enquiries: Tattvāloka
125-A, Mittal Court, Nariman Point
Bombay 400 021, India.
In case of a change of address, please enclose the addressed portion of your Tattvāloka wrapper.

Established in 1978, Tattvāloka is published by Sri Abhinava Vidyatheertha Mahaswamigal Education Trust under the aegis of Sri Jagadguru Sankaracharya Mahasamsthanam, Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham, Sringeri 577 139, Karnataka, India.
Tattvāloka is issued bimonthly from Bombay (April, June, August, October, December, and February).

Contributions of articles, photographs and sketches are welcome. All articles published in Tattvāloka do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor.

Sparks of Wisdom

*

Into blinding darkness enter those who worship ignorance and into yet more blinding darkness, as it were, enter those who are attached to knowledge.

Isa Upanishad

It is known to him--to whom it is unknown; to whom it is known, he knows not. To those who know, it is unknown; to those who do not know, it is known.

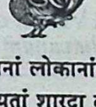
Kena Upanishad

Just as the dream becomes unreal in the waking state and the waking state in the dream, death becomes unreal in birth and birth in death.

Yoga Vasishtha Sara

Salutations to Sri Guru. There is no one higher than the Guru, no austerity greater than (service to) the Guru, no truth greater than the knowledge (of him).

Sri Guru Gita



तत्त्वं जिज्ञासमानानां लोकानां प्रीतिमावहन् ।
तत्त्वालोको विजयतां शारदा दयया सदा ॥

May Tattvāloka always excel, by the grace of Sarada, delighting the seekers of Truth.

H.H. Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

Next Issue:
Srimad Bhagavatam

Published by T. R. Ramachandran for Sri Abhinava Vidyatheertha Mahaswamigal Education Trust
FROM 125-A, MITTAL COURT, NARIMAN POINT, BOMBAY-400 021 AND PRINTED BY HIM AT TYPOGRAPHIC,
B-26, ROYAL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, NAIGAUM CROSS ROAD, BOMBAY-400 031, INDIA.

CONTENTS

Kalidasa, an Advaitic Poet

Preface 4

Introduction
Jagadguru Speaks... 6

PART ONE
IDEALS OF KALIDASA

Kalidasa's Works in Modern Age 7
Dr. E. R. Rama Bai

Message of Universal Harmony 11
Dr. M. Narasimhachari

Kalidasa--the Spiritual Seeker 14
K. S. Balasubramanian

Steps in Advaita 16
Dr. C. L. Ramakrishnan

Vignettes of Bhakti in Kalidasa 19
P. Gopalakrishnan and R. Asha

Kalidasa's Vision of Life 22
Kaveri Sukhavanam and Sumitra M. Gautama

PART TWO
WORKS OF KALIDASA

Advaitic Merit of *Sakuntalam* 25
Radha Sadasivan

Symbolism in *Meghaduta* 29
Dr. T. Narayanan Kutty

Advaitic Ideals in *Malavikagnimitra* 32
Dr. S. Ramaratnam

Natya in *Malavikagnimitra* 36
R. Asha

Advaitic Values in *Naandi Slokas* 39
Dr. V. Abirama Sundaram

Kalidasa's Ideas as Reflected in Sculpture 43
V. Maithreyi

Backgrounds to Paintings based on Kalidasa's Works 46
Arundhati Vartak

PART THREE
HYMNS FROM KALIDASA

Trimurti Stotram 49
Kalidasa

Praise of Vishnu 54
A. W. Ryder

PART FOUR
VEDANTA IN DAILY LIFE

News and Events 65

Nobility of Women in Kalidasa 74
Dr. S. Padmanabhan

Upama Kalidasasya 76
Dr. N. B. Patil

Divinity of Nature in Kalidasa 79
Dr. Meera Sharma

Book Review 82
Dr. N. B. Patil

Children's Corner 83
Vijay Venkateshwar

Cover Painting: Lord Siva and Saptarishis, a scene from Kalidasa's Kumarasambhava
Artist: Miss Arundhati Vartak

COURTESY: MR. LEKHRAJ PURSWANEY, AJMER, INDIA.

Preface

Kalidasa is one of the greatest Indian poets and dramatists in Sanskrit. The literary beauty of his works is sometimes compared with the immortal epics of Valmiki and Vyasa. His aesthetic sense of nature, depiction of deep human emotions and imaginative use of language are unparalleled. At the same time, he is noted for the refined expression of both the sacred and mundane ideals of Indian culture.

Most of the scholars consider that Kalidasa probably lived in the period between 1st century B.C. and 5th century A.D. The traditional belief is that Kalidasa was a member in the assembly of poets and scholars in the court of emperor Vikramaditya, who started the Vikrama era in B.C. 56. Whatever be the date of Kalidasa, it could be known from his works that he spent the major part of his life in Ujjain, and was greatly indebted to the city in many ways.

This issue attempts to bring into focus the basic philosophic beliefs that inspired Kalidasa's thinking. Though rooted in the Advaitic view, Kalidasa shows a broad understanding of the variety of religious tenets and practices that were prevalent in the country in his time.

In this issue, Part One presents the ideals of Kalidasa. Part Two refers to his main works in the light of these ideals. Part Three contains verses from his works in Sanskrit and English translation in praise of the Trimurti. Part Four deals with selected topics, such as women, nature, and upamas (similes and metaphors) used in Kalidasa's works.

In Part One, Dr. M. Narasimhachari says that the effect of Kali-

dasa's poetry is perhaps unique, with its message of unity of all life. His grand theme of samanvaya is the abiding message for everyone--the synthesis of good and bad, life and death, heaven and earth.

Some of the apparent contradictions in the Upanishads are resolved in the article by Dr. C. L. Ramakrishnan, following the arguments of Sankara. These contradictions are seen as steps in the realisation of the Advaitic vision.

In "Vignettes of Bhakti in Kalidasa", authors P. Gopalakrishnan and R. Asha say that even when Kalidasa glorifies Lord Siva in Kumarasambhava, it is not Siva the destroyer of the world, but the absolute Brahman. They also illustrate the various elements of bhakti, with examples from Kalidasa's works.

In dealing with "Kalidasa's Vision of Life", Kaveri Sukhavanam and Sumitra M. Gautama have sensitively depicted the nature of tapas in Kumarasambhava, the literary beauty of Sakuntalam, and the conflict of duty in Raghuvamsa.

In Part Two, Radha Sadasivan in giving the deepest meaning of Kalidasa's Sakuntalam says that the sudden gust of youthful impulse had given Sakuntala to Dusyanta, but that was not the real winning. The best means of winning is by devotion and austerity. Therefore, the poet has shown the two lovers undergo a long and arduous separation in order that they may gain each other truly and perfectly.

Dr. S. Ramaratnam in his article on Kalidasa's Malavikagnimitra has elaborated some of the fundamentals of Advaita and has used simple illustrations to bring them into focus. He explains the key concepts of Atmavidya, avidya and the importance of guru.

Each of the benedictory verses, called Naandi slokas, in Kalidasa's Sakuntalam, Vikramorvasiya and Malavikagnimitra, are analysed in the article by Dr. V. Abirama Sundaram. He says that the verses speak of only one reality called by different names, which can be realised by withdrawing one's senses from external objects to the inner Self.

P.D.

H. H. Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

Jagadguru Speaks...

Kalidasa, an Advaitic Poet

Mahakavi Kalidasa holds a unique place in Sanskrit literature. In his works, the fine nuances of literature blend with a high sense of Advaitic (non-dualist) reality.

In *Raghuvamsa*, for example, in which Lord Vishnu is praised, or for that matter, in *Kumarasambhava* in which the deities praised are Brahma and Lord Siva, Kalidasa's poetic description splendidly brings out the Advaitic aspect of unity. This skill was certainly exceptional.

Kalidasa also had the marvellous capacity to introduce apt similes.

सुतौ लक्ष्मण शत्रुघ्नौ सुमित्रा सुषुवे यमौ। सम्यगगाराधिता विद्या प्रबोध विनयाविव॥

In this *sloka*, Kalidasa says that if one's studies *(vidya)* were fruitful, both knowledge *(jnana)* and modesty *(vinaya)* will be the result. This dictum concerning *vidya* is beautifully brought out by his allusion to Sumitra in *Raghuvamsa*. He says that just as *vidya* begets knowledge and modesty, so also Sumitra gave birth to two sons, Lakshmana and Satrugna.

Although a great poet, Kalidasa had no trace of ego. This is seen when we read in the beginning of *Raghuvamsa* that his attempt to write the glories of the kings of Raghu dynasty with a limited intellect is like crossing a huge ocean with a small raft.

क्वसूर्य प्रभवो वंश:क्वचाल्प विषया मति:। तितीर्षुर्दुस्तरं मोहादुडुपेनास्मि सागरम्॥

From his various poetic works and dramas, we can learn many truths contained in the Veda *Sastra*, jurisprudence pertaining to kings and even worldly conduct. It is mainly because of the enunciation of these truths that our elders in ancient times concluded that there was no poet equal to Kalidasa. People would do well to study Kalidasa's works and learn these truths.

Part One

Kalidasa's Works in Modern Age

DR. E. R. RAMA BAI

Kalidasa's innumerable depictions of human love and relationship are of universal appeal, holding good to this day.

Kalidasa, the brightest star in the galaxy of poets, was the author of two great epics, *Raghuvamsa* and *Kumarasambhava*; three dramas *Malavikagnimitra*, *Vikramorvasiya* and *Abhijnanasakuntalam*; and two lyrics *Ritusamhara* and *Meghaduta*. His plays, epics and lyrics have exercised much influence on the later Indian literature.

In the last quarter of the 18th century, when some of the western scholars began to study Sanskrit literature, it was Kalidasa and his play on *Sakuntalam* which impressed them in an astonishing manner. The German version of the English translation of the *Abhijnanasakuntalam* by William Jones attracted the attention of the eminent German scholars Goethe and Herder.

Kalidasa possessed a unique power of description in a simple and lucid style, be it either of human beings or of the animal kingdom. He exercised magical skill in blending nature with human feelings. The picture which the poet has rendered of the personal life, ideals and the social fabric of ancient India--of the Vedic and Puranic times--has earned him everlasting fame.

The ethical sentiments incorporated in his *kavyas* and his adherence to *dharma* render his poems immortal. Some of the problems, such as the evils of alcoholic drinks, consequences of excessive sensual pleasures, absence of religious tolerance, are mentioned in his works and the answers have been given by the poet himself. This paper intends to deal with a few such questions.

On Religious Tolerance

Today each nation is obsessed with the question of the attitude of individuals towards faith in God and the degree of religious tolerance towards others. In the tenth canto of *Raghuvamsa* where the *devas* sing the praise of the Lord, Kalidasa suggests the right approach to the above question.

"The poet who is aware of the fact that every individual is honestly endeavouring to approach Godhead in many divergent ways, reconciles them all. He points out that all lead to the same goal. One should not think that his alone is the correct path leading to heaven. God fulfills himself in many ways, as expressed in the *Bhagavad Gita.*"

Kalidasa exhibits such tolerance in his own works when he offers prayers to Brahma and Vishnu in his *kavyas*, *Kumarasambhava* and *Raghuvamsa*. That he himself is a great devotee of Lord Siva is a fact known from his dramas. Such a spirit of tolerance is absolutely necessary, especially in a period of great conflict of ideals.

On the Asramas

The kings of the glorious solar dynasty set the ideal of married love regulated by the four stages of life–*brahmacharya*, *grihastha*, *vanaprastha* and *sannyasa*. Kalidasa points out that when Raghu learnt about Aja's victory over other kings and his marriage with Indumati, he wished to resort to the *vanaprastha asrama*. He justified it by saying that when a proper heir has emerged to continue the family, kings of solar dynasty should not wish to continue to be in *grihastha asrama*.

Aja is described as accepting the kingdom not for mere enjoyment but to fulfill his father's command. He considered the kingdom on a par with his own wife Indumati, thereby pointing out that he ruled the kingdom in keeping with the principles of *dharma sastra*, treating all his subjects equally with love and compassion.

Kalidasa points out the duties of a wife and the deep-rooted unfading love of the husband towards his wife, when he describes the tragedy of the death of Indumati. Recalling the virtues and accomplishment of Indumati, Aja took a steadfast vow not to accept a second wife after the death of his beloved wife. Thus, a righteous life guided by the principles laid down by *dharma sastra* is conducive to long lasting happiness and contentment.

On Sensual Enjoyment

Kalidasa in *Raghuvamsa* strikes a note of warning against the evils caused by unbridled passion and sensual enjoyment. He gives a picturesque description of King Agnivarna who had neglected his personal, religious and royal duties, and spent his entire life in the company of dancing girls and spirituous liquor. As a result of his excessive enjoyments, he was overpowered by consumption and thereby brought the downfall of the solar dynasty and his own destruction.

According to Kalidasa, the enjoyment of pleasures or *kama* must be regulated by righteous conduct (*dharma*) as ordained by Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita*: *dharmaviruddho bhutesu kamosmi bharatarsabha* (VII. II)

On the Folly of Secret Love

In the drama *Abhijnanasakuntalam* the untold miseries undergone by Sakuntala should be attributed to the folly of secret love and enjoyment with an unknown person. The poet has said: *Atah pariksya kartavyam visesat- sangatam rahah, Ajnatahr dayesvevam vairibhavati sauhrdam.*

Sage Kanva, while sending the message through the hermit boys, points out that both the king and Sakuntala had not consulted the elders. Again, in the court of king Dusyanta, Gautami hints that since the marriage of Sakuntala with Dusyanta took place in the absence of elders, she could not come to her rescue.

On Pure Love

In contrast, Kalidasa in *Kumarasambhava* depicts pure, sincere and lasting love which is free from blind passion and physical lust. Uma, realising that mere physical charm is not enough to win the heart of Lord Siva, resolves to perform penance through austerities and devotion. Dressed in bark garments, she does severe penance.

In summer, she sits in the midst of four burning fires and gazes at the sun. In the rainy season, she sleeps at night on a rock, exposing herself to squally winds and rain. In winter, she stands in cold waters. She thus excels even ascetics in austerities.

Pleased with this, Siva appears before her in the garb of a *brahmacarin* and later reveals his identity. After recognizing Siva, Uma conveys through her friend that her father Himavan should be formally approached for her hand. Accordingly, Siva sends the seven sages to Himavan to seek the hand of Parvati. Himavan gladly agrees and the marriage takes place in consonance with the rules laid down by the scriptures.

In his drama *Malavikagnimitra*, Kalidasa describes the king Agnimitra as being elated on hearing the confession of Malavika's love and says, "If the *samanuraga* is subsisting between the lover and beloved, even the extinction of body is preferable to them who have no hope of coming together?" *Paraspara praptini rasayorvaram sariranasopi samanuragayoh.* *(Malavikagnimitra, II)*

On Inappropriate Love

In the *Vikramorvasiya*, the poet points out that love between man and woman of unequal status would give rise to many difficulties. The example is the love between Pururavas and Urvasi, a celestial nymph, who by her very birth and profession in life is not bound by the principles of marriage as laid down in scriptures. It leads to many complications and produces even temporary insanity of the lover, resulting in his banishment for quite some time from home and from his kingly duties in his capital city of Pratisthana.

We see in the works of Kalidasa a spiritual and aesthetic type of love, happily blended with religion and devoid of physical lust.

Dr. E. Rama Bai is Reader, Sanskrit Department, University of Madras, Madras.

☆

Life of Kalidasa

Kalidasa did not date his works nor did he say anything about himself or his near and dear ones. We have to glean from internal and external evidence to find some details about his life. But all such attempts hardly yield any results.

We can not even finalise the date of Kalidasa. Some place him in the 1st century B.C. and regard him as a contemporary of Chandragupta. Sir William Jones and C. V. Vaidya endorse this view. The later limit of Kalidasa's date is more certain as there is an inscriptional record for the same. Kalidasa is mentioned in the Ahihole inscription (634 A.D.) along with Bharavi. Banabhatta (6th century A.D.) also praises Kalidasa in the beginning of the famous biographical work on Harshavardhana.

We can safely say that he must have undergone a rigourous schooling in a *gurukul* and was thus adequately acquainted with the Vedic and *Smriti* literature. This is clear from the references to *Rgveda* and the mode of its recitation, as has been described in *Kumarasambhava* (2-12) and in *Raghuvamsa* (15-176).

The theme of *Vikramorvasiya* closely follows the narrations in *Rgveda* (10-95) and *Satapatha Brahmana* (5-12). Kalidasa's description of Brahma, Siva and Vishnu in his works reminds one of similar Upanishadic expressions. His description of Siva, as a yogi, in the third canto of *Kumarasambhava*, shows that he had studied the yogic practices in greater detail.

His study of *Smriti* literature can also be inferred from various phrases he has used in *Kumarasambhava* and *Raghuvamsa*. The narratives of administration of Agnimitra, Pururvasa and Dusyanta indicate Kalidasa's acquaintance with *Arthasastra* as well. He also knew the geography of this land then known as *Bharata Varsha*. Kalidasa had no confusion in describing the route which he had advised Megha to take to reach Alaka in the far off Himalayas.

It is also seen that Kalidasa knew the intricacies in various fine arts such as music, dancing and painting. A portrait of Sakuntala and the beautiful landscape in the background have been described with the finest detail an artist would care for.

*(Extracted from R. D. Karmarkar's "**Kalidasa**", published in 1960 by Karnatak University, Dharwar).*

Message of Universal Harmony

DR. M. NARASIMHACHARI

Kalidasa, along with Valmiki and Vyasa, epitomises the universal essence of literary beauty. His works also reveal a holistic view of men and matters.

Kalidasa was neither a fanatic nor a dogmatist. Nor was he sectarian in religion and philosophy. We may call him a Saiva, or Vaishnava, or Sakta or Kaumara. We may take him as an advocate of the concept of *trimurti* (trinity) of God. All that is needed for this synthetic view is present in his works *Kumara sambhava*, *Raghuvamsa*, *Abhijnanasa kuntalam* and *Meghaduta*, to mention the more prominent ones.

Attitude to Reality

He wants to show that heaven is not altogether different or superior to the earth. Desire for material enjoyment is not the ultimate goal of human existence, for it leads to agony and misery. Penance and detachment from material world alone can bring about everlasting happiness. This, in essence, is the philosophy of life that appears in his two Mahakavyas, *Kumarasambhava* and *Raghuvamsa*, and also in his immortal drama, *Abhijnanasakuntalam.*

The present paper makes an attempt to trace the poet's attitude to reality and worldly experience from the viewpoint of Advaita. It must be kept in mind that the well-known concepts of Sankara's philosophy and of the post-Sankara Advaitins are, to some extent, reflected in the poet's works.

Worldly Experience

Speaking of king Ḍilipa, the poet says that "he enjoyed pleasures consequent upon his position, as a king and as a man, without any attachment." The inconsolable grief of king Aja immortalised by Kalidasa in *Raghuvamsa* bears evidence to the truth that fate is all-powerful and nobody can escape its sway.

That the worldly life is bound to become empty is very powerfully put into the mouth of the bewailing king Aja: "My courage has disappeared; my interest or love for life is gone; music and turn of seasons no longer evoke any interest in me; wearing ornaments has lost its meaning..."

"Death is indeed the natural state of all embodied beings; in fact, life alone is unnatural. If one is found to be breathing and alive in this world, even for a moment, it is something very rare."

Speaking of Dasaratha's old age, the poet says that the king reached the last stage of his life, having enjoyed all worldly objects. Like the flame of a lamp, which has consumed all the oil in the container, he is just living on the last portion of the wick.

On Happiness and Unhappiness

Take the instance of Yaksha, the semi-divine denizen of Alaka, who was separated from his beloved by a curse of his master Kubera. Though semi-divine, he was almost human--with human limitations. All his divine powers were lost for the time being. His lamentations and bewailings could even make the sylvan deities on Ramagiri shed tears.

Towards the end of the lyric *Meghaduta*, we find the cloud- messenger telling the Yaksha that "nobody is exclusively happy or exclusively unhappy in this world. Everything keeps rotating like the rim of a wheel."

In the *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, the poet conveys the same truth (that happiness and unhappiness are never steady in man's life) through a description of the setting of the moon and the rising of the sun.

Kanva in his message to Dusyanta points out his duty to look after his newly wedded wife with all the love and affection due to her; of course, "the rest is all in the hands of fate" "Human life is what it is. The ultimate bliss lies in reaching the highest, having attained which, there is no rebirth."

Nirguna Brahman

The description, by the poet, of each God in the trinity as supreme, indicates that the ultimate truth is the non-dual Brahman, which is eternal, pure knowledge. That the same truth assumes different forms as Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, is suggested in the following verse in *Raghuvamsa*:

Rasantaranyekarasam yatha divyam payo 'snute,
Dese dese guneshvevam, avasthah, tvam avikriyah. (v. 17).

This statement also is an echo of the *Katha Upanishad* passage, *"Yathodakam durge vrstam parvatesu vidhavati"*, which means that ultimate truth gets different designations due to the variety of limiting adjuncts.

The subsequent verse is:

Ameyo mitalokastvam arthiparthanavahah,
Ajito vishnur atyantam avyaktovyakra nam. (v. 18)

It brings out the apparent contrast between the *sopadhika* and *nirupadhika* aspects of Brahman through different pairs of opposites, such as *"ameyo mitalokah,"* etc. This is also conveyed in another verse:

Sarvajnastvam avijnatah sarvayonis tvam atmabhuh,
Sarvaprabhur anisastvam ekastvam sarvarupabhak. (v. 20)

That the ultimate truth is in one's own heart and is in the form of effulgence and can be realised through the concentration of mind by the *yogins* desiring liberation, is beautifully brought out by the poet in the following verse:

Abhyasa-nigrirhitena manasa hrdayasrayam,
Jyotirmayam vicinvanti yoginastvam vimuktaye. (v. 23)

All Paths are One

The truth enshrined in the *Brahmasutra* (I.4), *"Tattu samanvayat"*, is brought out by the poet to the effect that all paths, taught in different scriptures for attaining salvation, do ultimately converge in the supreme Brahman like different streams of the Ganges merging in the ocean.

The incarnations of the Supreme Being are for the sole purpose of helping the living. As a matter of fact, the Lord has nothing to attain afresh in this process. Creation is an act of sheer grace. The Supreme Being, assisted by his divine Maya which possesses various powers and attributes, manifests himself. (Cf. *Bhagavad Gita: "Prakrtim svam adhisthaya sambhavamyatma mayaya"*).

Message of Harmony

Kalidasa flourished in a period when differences divided the minds of philosophers. If differences of mind are presented as the only truth, social life is sure to disintegrate. The country, once united by the Vedic thoughts (cf. *Rg Veda: A no bhadrah kratavo yantu visvatah*), became divided into conflicting groups. The doctrine of synthesis and harmony (*samanvaya*), not only from the viewpoint of a philosopher, but also from that of an accomplished artist, is sure to have great significance for ethics and sociology as well.

However, Kalidasa inspires and interests us not as a mere specialist in aesthetics. His works have a great pragmatic validity. The effect of his poetry is perhaps unique, with its message of unity of all life. That is why he is ranked along with the sages of yore, like Valmiki and Vyasa. His grand theme of *samanvaya* is the abiding message for every one--the synthesis of good and bad, life and death, heaven and earth. It is said that a genius is the product of a century. And Kalidasa, indeed, is the product of a millennium.

***Dr. M. Narasimhachari** is Professor and Head of the Department of Vaishnavism, University of Madras, Madras.*

☆

In silence and rest, far from all things tangible or natural, illumination comes.

St. John

By doing nothing, one wins the world. But when one grasps, the world is beyond his winning.

To be rigid is the way of death. To be supple and soft is the way of life. My three treasures are compassion, economy and humility.

Laotse

Kalidasa--the Spiritual Seeker

K. S. BALASUBRAMANIAN

Kalidasa in his kavyas presents the chaste, true and ideal love of human beings bordering on divinity.

India, the homeland of spirituality, has produced great saints, seers, mystics who, living in tune with nature, gave their entire life to the realisation of supreme bliss.

We find ample testimony of this in the literary works of great poets, such as Kalidasa. A deep study of his works will reveal that the intention of the poet was not merely to show his skill in different forms of poetic expression or to exhibit an understanding of the various manifestations of nature and its beauty, but also to convey the subtle element of spiritual truth.

Love and Meditation

Even in his treatment of themes, such as love, Kalidasa never fails to bring out the spiritual aspect. In depicting, for example, the union or separation of lovers, Kalidasa brings out the similarity in the closeness between the individual soul (*jiva*) and the supreme soul (Brahman or God), or between *prakriti* (nature) and *Purusha* (the supreme soul)

The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (II.4. 5) says, " Not for the sake of the husband is the husband dear, but for the sake of the divine Self manifesting in him, is he dear." All love is a sacred expression because love is divine. Kalidasa in his *kavyas*, *Kumarasambhava*, *Raghu- vamsa*, and the lyrical work *Meghaduta*, has represented the chaste, true and ideal love of human beings bordering on divinity.

Kalidasa considered that only through love and meditation one can attain God. This is evident from the description of Parvati's efforts to attain the Lord. After Siva burnt Cupid (*Manmatha*) to ashes, Parvati resorted to meditation and penance as the sole means of reaching her goal.

Kalidasa says, "She desired to endow her personal beauty with purposefulness by means of penances, entering into a state of meditation. By what other means could such a unique felicity in love and such a peerless husband be secured?" (*Kumarasambhava, V.2*)

The Upanishads also advocate the same view. The *Taittiriya Upanishad* (III. 2.1) says, "Know the Brahman through meditation. Meditation is the supreme Brahman." In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna says that only through real devotion one can attain him.

One Spirit

Spirituality accepts one God, who is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. The benedictory verse (*Naandi*) of the drama *Vikramorvasiya* is a classic example to show that Kalidasa was a real spiritual *sadhaka*, who believed in one God only. He says:

"He who is declared in the Upanishads as the one spirit pervading heaven and earth, to whom alone the name *Isvara* applies truly to the letter and to none else, who is sought within by those who desire liberation, through controlling the vital breaths and other yogic processes--may that immutable Lord, who is easily realised through abiding communion in devotion, grant you eternal bliss."

Kalidasa clearly points out that God need not be searched in the forests by torturing oneself. He should be meditated upon as dwelling within oneself: *Antah mrgyate mumuksubhih.*

Liberation in Life

The aim of a spiritual *sadhaka* is to attain liberation within his lifetime, thereby preventing any more births. Kalidasa proclaims himself as a real seeker of liberation (*mumukshu*) when he says, *"Mama api ca ksapayatu nilalohitah punarbhavam"* (*Abhijnanasakuntalam*, VII.35).

Thus, Kalidasa ends his wonderful play *Abhijnanasakuntalam* with the feeling of a true *sadhaka* whose aim should be to realise Brahman within his lifetime. The *Chhandogya Upanishad* says, (VIII. 15.1), *"Na ca punaravartate."* The *Kenopanishad* (II.13) also says that if one loses the opportunity of realising Brahman in this world, it is a great loss.

***K. S. Balasubramanian** is Research Assistant in The Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute, Madras.*

◆

A Tribute

In the words of Sri Aurobindo, "Kalidasa is the great supreme poet of the senses, of aesthetic beauty, of sensuous emotion... He is, besides, a consummate artist, profound in conception and suave in execution, a master of sound and language, who has moulded for himself out of the infinite possibilities of the Sanskrit tongue, a verse and diction which are absolutely the grandest, most puissant, and most full-voiced of any human speech, a language of the gods."

No wonder that Kalidasa rises high above the literary giants of classical India and also justifiably takes his seat along with Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, Goethe, Schiller and other great western classical poets.

Dr. N. B. Patil

Steps in Advaita

DR. C. L. RAMAKRISHNAN

In his characteristic simple, lucid and picturesque way, Kalidasa offers the quintessence of Advaita in his works.

In his *Kumarasambhava,* Kalidasa alludes to the state of Brahman, before creation started, when only the pure Self or pure Atman (*Kevalatman*) existed. This pure consciousness, thereafter, modified into the trinity for making the division of the three *gunas*.

This concept is to be noted in the *Maitrayani Upanishad,* where Brahma is said to be pure consciousness (Brahman) associated with the *rajo guna* of Maya, Lord Siva to be the same Brahman associated with the *tamo guna* of Maya and Lord Vishnu, again the same Brahman, associated with the *sattva guna* of Maya. The trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva is a modification of this ultimate reality (Brahman) and appear superior or inferior to one another, at different times.

Speaking about the non-difference between the individual soul (*jiva*) and the cosmic soul (Brahman), Kalidasa says that Brahman enters each body becoming the *jiva*. The Brahman is said to be the *prakriti,* the primordial cause of the world, as well as the individual soul. (*Kumarasambhava* 2- 13).

The praise of Lord Siva by the seven sages as the Lord who is the indweller in all creatures brings out the same point--the non-difference between the Brahman and the *jiva*. (*Kumarasambhava*, 6-21)

Speaking about the illusory nature of the world--*jaganmithyatva*--the poet says that God is the cause of the world and also is not the cause of the world. (*Kumarasambhava,* 2-9)

Nature of Brahman

In the Advaita school, the apparent contradiction in the Upanishads regarding the "description" of the Brahman is resolved, following the arguments of Sri Sankara. In some places, we find the Brahman described as with attributes, *sarva rasah, sarva gandhah* (*Chhandogya Upanishad*). In others, we find the description as without attributes, *annanu, adirgham, ahrasvam* (*Brihadraranyaka Upanishad*).

Kalidasa follows the Upanishads in describing Brahman as both gross and subtle in manifestation, clear to the means of human perception and, at the same time, unclear too. (*Kumarasambhava,* 2-11). The *Bharatavakya* in *Sakuntalam* speaks of the *sakala, niskala* and *sakala-niskala* aspects of the Lord.

This apparent contradiction is resolved through the brilliant commentary of Sri Sankara on the *Brahmasutras*. Worship of God as *saguna* (with attributes) is ultimately transcended to arrive at the level of *nirguna* (without attributes).

Elsewhere, Sri Sankara dwells upon God as *saguna* during meditation, thus giving a *rupa* (form) to him. He speaks out in praise of the Lord (who cannot be comprehended even by the mind). He visits temples and holy places to worship the Lord (who cannot be enclosed in confined places). He (Sri Sankara) thus commits mistakes, so to say, and beseeches the Lord to pardon him--the idea being that one should go higher from *sagunopasana* to *nirgunopasana.*

On Vrittis

One of the tenets of Advaita is that the Upanishads lead the way to Self-realisation, which in effect means the *jiva* remains in its real state or nature i.e. Brahman. There are apparently contradictory passages in the Upanishads on this point, such as: "I seek instructions regarding the Brahman, which could be known only through the Upanishads." But again, "The Brahman is a principle that cannot be reached either through words or even the mind, as the mind itself returns, along with the words, unable to reach the realm of the ultimate reality."

The Advaitic school explains these statements by inroducing the concept of *vritti* or the mode of cognition. The mind issues out through the sense organs, reaches the place where the respective sense object is, and undergoes modification in the form of that object. The consciousness reflected in this *vritti* is known as empirical knowledge. The role of *vritti* is to remove the nescience veiling the object, whence the reality, reflected in it, manifests the object.

Kalidasa refers to this concept, while praising Lord Vishnu in the *Raghuvamsa* as *sarvajna* and *avijnatah.*

On Sakshi

The concept of *Sakshi* is peculiar to Advaita. *Sakshi* is said to be the witness for all the activities of the *jiva,* while remaining free from any activity. The Upanishads frequently refer to this concept very evocatively.

Kalidasa refers to this concept of *Sakshi caitanya:*

Sa te duhitaram saksat
Saksi visvasya karmanam.
Vrunute varadah sambhuh
Asmatsamkramitaih padaih.

Jivanmukti

Jivanmukti is a concept admitted specially in the Advaita school. The other schools of Vedanta, such as Visistadvaita and Dvaita, do not subscribe to this concept. The state of *jivanmukti* is described variously as *sthitaprajna, gunatita,* etc. in the *Bhagavad Gita.* This is a state in which one is in the world but not of it, as in the case of a lotus leaf.

The other schools refute this contention and hold that liberation is possible only after the body falls off (*videha mukti*). They even say that the concept of *jivanmukti*, i.e. "the state of being liberated, while living in an embodied form" is a contradiction in terms. Advaita, however, relying on *Sruti* texts, such as *Tam evam vidvan amrta iha bhavati* and *Atrabrahma samasnute*, holds that it is possible to attain this state in one's own life-time.

While describing graphically the penance of Lord Siva, in the *Kumarasambhava*, Kalidasa alludes to this state of *jivanmukti*. Having controlled the flow of the mind through the nine openings in the body and keeping his mind steadfast, Lord Siva was in a state of introspection. At the end of the exercise, after having had the vision of his own Self, the ultimate reality, he reverted to the original state. (*Kumarasambhava*, 3- 50/58)

On Triveni

While on the return journey to Ayodhya (*Nandigrama*), after the conquest over Lanka, Sri Rama explains in the *Raghuvamsa* the features on the ground to Sita, from the aerial chariot, *puspaka vimana*. In one of the verses, it likens to the body of Lord Siva the waters at the *triveni sangama*, which appear in patches of white and black due to the merging of the (white) waters of Ganga and the (dark) waters of Yamuna. There is a similar colour scheme on the body of Lord Siva with white ashes and black snakes.

Sri Rama says that due to mere contact with the waters at *triveni*,

an embodied soul is bestowed with liberation or *moksa*, even though that soul is not aware of the real nature of its Self. (*Raghuvamsa*, 13-58)

Mallinatha, commenting on this verse, says that while elsewhere only through *jnana* one can attain liberation, in the *triveni* this is achieved by taking a dip: *Anyatra jnanadeva muktih, atra tu snandeva muktirityarthah*.

Bhakti Yoga

Kalidasa points out that *bhakti yoga* is one of the internal (mental) modes of gaining *atmajnana*. A host of references to this concept can be found in the works of Kalidasa. The reference to Lord Siva--to whom the poet-philosopher has utmost devotion--appears as *Astamurti* in his dramas *Sakuntalam* and *Malavikagnimitra*, and poems *Raghuvamsa* and *Kumarasambhava*.

In the benedictory verses (*Nandi slokas*) in the two dramas, the text runs as *Astabhiryasya Krsnam jagatapi tanubhih bibhrato nabhimanah* (*Malavikagnimitra*) and *Avatuvastabhi restabhirisah* (*Sakuntalam*).

All Gods Are One

Kalidasa has thus shown his deep understanding of the tenets of the Advaita school of Indian thought in his works. He has eschewed controversies regarding superiority of one God over another, or one system over another. ❒

Vignettes of Bhakti in Kalidasa

P. GOPALAKRISHNAN AND R. ASHA

In Kalidasa's works, the personal God Lord Siva is extolled as the supreme Brahman.

The liberation of the human soul from worldly bondage has been the goal of all schools of Indian philosophy. A survey reveals three main paths to liberation, namely, the path of action (*karma marga*), the path of knowledge (*jnana marga*) and the path of devotion (*bhakti marga*).

What is Bhakti?

Narada in his *Bhakti Sutras* defines it thus, *Sa khalu parama premarupa*, i.e., "It is intense love towards the Lord." The nature of intense love is described by Sankara, with the help of analogies, in his famous *Sivanandalahari*.

Sankara compares the constant flow of the mind towards God as: *(i)* The movement of the seeds of the *ankola* tree, on falling to the ground, towards the trunk of the tree. *(ii)* The attraction of iron-filings to a magnet. *(iii)* The attachment of a *pativrata* wife to her Lord. *(iv)* The entwining of a creeper around a tree. *(v)* The continuous flow of a river towards the ocean. In his *Vivekacudamani* he puts it in the following words: *Svasvarupanusandhanam bhaktirityabhidhiyate.*

In the *Bhagavata Purana, bhakti* is again defined as the incessant flow of the mind towards the Lord.

Madguna srutimatrena mayi
sarvagunasaye,
Manogatiravicchinna yatha
gangambhasombudhau. (3.29)

The Lord can be conceived in any form one desires. The form of the Lord gets firmly imprinted in the mind. The absolute Brahman, though actually formless and devoid of attributes, assumes that form to serve the purposes of a *sadhaka* or a *bhakta*. *Upasakanam karyartham brahmano rupakalpana.*

Kalidasa and Bhakti

In the *bhakti* cult, the personal God may be extolled as the supreme Brahman. A scrutiny of Kalidasa's works reveals that while Siva is extolled in the *Kumarasambhava*, Vishnu is extolled in the *Raghuvamsa*. Yet he had an inexplicable fascination for Siva. However, even when he glorifies Lord Siva, it is not Siva, the destroyer he refers to, but Siva, the absolute Brahman.

In most of his works, the invocatory verses are devoted to Lord Siva and are indicative of his intense devotion and reverence for the Lord. In his *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, he invokes the Lord in the following *sloka: Ya srshti srasturadya....tabhirastabhirisah.*

He refers to the eight manifestations of the Lord, namely, *Rudra, Bhava, Sarva, Isana, Pasupati, Bhima, Ugra* and *Mahadeva*, corresponding to water, sun, earth, fire, air, ether, the officiating brahmana and the moon. These are the sustaining factors of the universe.

There are other references in his *Malavikagnimitra* and *Kumarasambhava*. In the former, he explicitly requests the Lord to remove ignorance (*avidya*) in the mind of a devotee and show him the path of spiritual enlightenment. In his *Vikramorvasiya*, he invokes Lord Siva as the absolute primordial one.

According to Kalidasa, Lord Siva can be attained by steadfast devotion and meditation. *Sthira bhaktih yogah dhyanam ca tabhyam sulabhah.* This is in consonance with the teaching of the *Kaivalyopanishad*: *Sraddhabhakti dhyanayogadavehi.* [1.2]

Elements of Bhakti

Kalidasa maintains that *bhakti* can lead to liberation. A sincere devotee can definitely attain realisation, adopting the necessary elements of *bhakti*. These elements or subsidiaries, as they can be called, have been mentioned in various *Puranas*. They are: *Sravana, kirtana, smarana, padasevana, arcana, vandana, dasya, and atmanivedana.* Kalidasa subtly makes a reference to these, mainly in his *Kumarasambhava* and *Raghuvamsa*.

Sravana: It constitutes the constant listening to the glories and attributes of the Lord. Though Kalidasa does not explicitly allude to it, he seems to imply it in *Kumarasambhava*.

Parvati is angered and disgusted when the ascetic (who was actually Lord Siva in disguise) speaks derisively of Lord Siva. She severely chastises the ascetic and praises the Lord in a few telling *slokas*. She winds up by saying that one, who listens to people talking ill of the Lord, is a sinner.

Kirtana: *Kirtana* means singing the glories of the Lord. In the *Kumarasambhava*, Lord Siva summons the seven sages with the intention of sending them to Himavan to ask for Parvati's hand. The sages, overjoyed at being summoned thus, effusively sing his glories in the following verses:

Yasya cetasi vastethah sa tavatkrtinam varah,
Kimpunarbramhayoneh yastava catasi vastate.

They address the Lord as *brahmayoni*, i.e. the cause of the Vedas, and say that one in whose mind the Lord resides is considered the best of all men. The Lord is also referred to as the inner soul of all creatures: *Antaratmasi dehinam*.

Smarana: Kalidasa portrays the *smarana* stage of *bhakti* very beautifully, when he describes Parvati's state of constant remembrance of the Lord. She was so affected by intense love for the Lord that she decided to perform severe austerities to obtain him. In all her waking and sleeping hours, she was forever thinking of him, in exclusion of everything else.

Padasevana, arcana and vandana: By loving service at the Lord's feet, the *bhakta* makes offerings to the Lord and prostrates before him. All these come under the above-mentioned elements of *bhakti*. When Siva performs penance, Parvati serves him lovingly.

Dasya: When Parvati serves the Lord, she does so with total dedication, as a true loving servant would do for his master. This *dasya bhava* has been skillfully portrayed by Kalidasa.

Incidentally, it is to be noted that humility should be an integral part of the *bhakta*, however successful he may be. This is evident in the concluding stanza of *Abhijnanasakuntalam*.

Atmanivedana: The *bhakta* offers himself totally to the Lord. At this juncture, a mention may be made of two maxims in the cult of *bhakti*, namely, *marjara kisora nyaya* and *markata kisora nyaya*, of which there are indications in Kalidasa's works.

Two Maxims of Bhakti

The first maxim can be explained by the example of the motherly concern a cat has for her kitten. The mother takes complete responsibility for her kitten, which needs to have no concern for itself. When the mother moves3 from one place to another, she lovingly carries the kitten by the scruff of its neck. The kitten needs no effort at all.

Similarly, the devotee, finding no other recourse, surrenders himself totally to the Lord. Due to his inherent grace and compassion, the Lord comes to the aid of the devotee. This compassion of the Lord is depicted by Kalidasa in the *Raghuvamsa*.

Tormented by Ravana, the gods take refuge in Lord Vishnu. The Lord then promises them that he would come down to the earth in the form of Lord Rama and alleviate the sufferings of the gods, by killing the demon Ravana (X. 40,44).

The second maxim can be explained by another example. The monkey, in contrast to the cat, has no thought for its young one. When it jumps from one place to another, it is the young one which must make efforts to hold on tightly, while the mother takes no care at all. A similar situation is found in the *Kumarasambhava*.

Parvati had failed in her first attempt to win over Lord Siva by her beauty and service. But she did not lose heart. With firm determination, she decided to perform severe penance. Her efforts paid off and the Lord came to her. In this case, it is the devotee who has to strive hard to attain the Lord.

Though *sastras* advocate diverse paths to liberation, all of them finally culminate in the realisation of Supreme Being, just as different rivers fall ultimately into the ocean and become one with it.

***P. Gopalakrishnan and R. Asha** are Research Scholars, Department of Sanskrit, University of Madras, Madras.*

Kalidasa's Vision of Life

KAVERI SUKHAVANAM AND SUMITRA M. GAUTAMA

Kalidasa displays the poetic admixture of the sensual with the sublime, the earthly with the divine, and the human with the eternal.

The Advaitic approach to life is that all manifestation is Maya, and the one eternal cause generates illusion and also dispels it. Kalidasa, with his transcendental view of life, deals in a similar manner with all the various troubles and crises in the lives of men.

In Kalidasa, the sordid and the painful aspects of life get toned down and transformed by the realization of the ephemeral quality of life. All suffering is seen by the writer as a stepping stone to *jnana*, and not as an end in itself. The different characters in Kalidasa change and develop through the story. They suffer and reflect. Life gives them an opportunity to shift into another dimension of reality. None of his plays are tragedies. Even *Meghaduta* ends on a note of hope, and the perception of an end to suffering.

Attitude to Life

Kalidasa's attitude to life is entrenched in the Advaitic world view. This is also brought out by *a)* the many references to Siva in his plays, *b)* the nature of the philosophical utterances which he puts into the mouth of his heroes and *vidushakas*, and *c)* the fact that the ultimate desire of the protagonist is not to be trapped in the whirl of cause and effect but to be free from rebirth.

Deeper than this, even, is the nature of his themes. Whether it is *Raghuvamsa*, where the genealogy of the *Suryavamsa* kings is explored, ending in the glorious story of *Bhagavan* Sri Rama, or the *Kumarasambhava*, where the beautiful and accomplished Parvati sacrifices beauty and power to seek the great Lord of her dreams, the themes in Kalidasa elevate and detach the psyche of the reader from mundane, puerile concerns.

Unique Contribution

Kalidasa's unique contribution to the history of Indian literature is a broad and instinctive appreciation of all forms of life, whether they are from nature, the animal world or the world of men. His protagonists establish a close and empathic relationship with all other life forms. Like Shakespeare he has a many-faceted understanding of life. He is an objective worshipper of nature in all its various aspects and his sensitivity extends to human responses as well. There is a synthesis of feeling between nature and man, as seen in *Sakuntalam* when the heroine leaves the hermitage.

His plays also reveal the dynamics of divine intervention in human life, as also the turmoils caused by a curse which cannot be avoided. Is this curse an inevitable outcome of life itself? Why should life take these tormented twists and turns, the author seems to ask? Sakuntala in *Sakuntalam*, the Yaksha in *Meghaduta*, Urvasi in *Vikramorvasiya*, Dilipa in *Raghuvamsa*, Kama in *Kumarasambhava*, all of them struggle to redeem a utopia long lost to them. The human soul, wrapped up in its own bondage, seeks release from an endless pattern of suffering.

Tapas in Kumarasambhava

The beautiful descriptions of Parvati and Himalayas, the location of Siva's penance, the life of divine pair in Kailasa and the birth of Kartikeya, in this magnificent play, are matched by the intense portrayal of the austere *tapas* of Parvati.

In this play, Kalidasa seems to be telling his readers that all the outer beauty of the world is nothing when compared to the brilliance of the spirit, as embodied by Siva. This is obviously the most Advaitic of Kalidasa's plays in sentiment, since it deals with the marriage and fatherhood of Lord Siva himself.

Parvati realises that all the attraction of the world cannot capture the heart of Siva. Only the power of *tapas* can.

Kalidasa seems to weave the plot around this bitter-sweet realisation. The grandeur of Uma's beauty in her father's primeval abode cannot draw to her heart's desire. Only the renunciation of all that is seemingly beautiful can give true fulfilment.

Kumarasambhava, over and above all other plays of Kalidasa, reveals the inherent austerity of the poet's genius, his conviction that the power of sensual beauty must bow before the peace of the ultimate beatitude, as mist clears with the advent of the sun.

Beauty of Sakuntalam

In this play, one of the gems of all time, Kalidasa has helped in the revival of the Vedic heritage. He says, right at the beginning,

Until the wise are satisfied,
I cannot feel that skill is shown,
The best trained mind requires support
And does not trust itself alone.

He revels in the simple and innocent description of the three young girls in the hermitage. The atmosphere is further enhanced by the fact that, earlier, the king gives up the hunting of animals in the precincts of the *ashrama* and exclaims, "How peaceful is this hermitage!" The timid and gentle life of an antelope is contrasted with the fierce aggression of the king's arrows, as if in premonition of the future happenings in the hermitage. The king, who avoids killing the deer, however takes away the heart of the pure Sakuntala.

The plot weaves through a variety of points and counter-points to its final resolution--the happiness of Sakuntala, the separation from the king, the curse of Duruvasa, the hope presented by the ring, the loss of the ring, the rejection by the king, the discovery of the ring and the reunion of the hero and heroine. The very uncertainty of human occurrences is emphasised here, as also the mind that generated joy and sorrow through likes and dislikes, and finally finds *samatva*, detachment when there is clarity.

Conflict of Duty in Raghuvamsa

Raghuvamsa is the story of the moral conflict between duty and justice. Dasaratha's just anointment of his son Rama as successor conflicts with the duty he owes to Kaikeyi. Rama's natural ascent to kingship conflicts with the duty he owes to his father and mother.

It is also the story of love, separation, sorrow and reunion, as all his other stories are. Sita joins her mother, the earth, and regains her status as Lakshmi. Lava and Kusha are installed on the throne of the Raghus.

Rama's mind is a river which has reached the sea. His decisions are all born of the complex balancing of duty with moral right, of the public good with the private commitment to well-being. The story is fraught with great tension between inner and outer realities and *dharma*. It is resolvable through the superhuman detachment of the divine protagonists, Rama and Sita.

The message of *Raghuvamsa* lies in the personality of the protagonists. It is in their unshakable faith in life and in each other, which lasts through the tremendous human travails that they had to undergo. Kalidasa's portrayal of the immortal epic keeps intact the essence of its quality while giving a poetic depth and colour all his own.

Meghaduta, *Vikramorvasiya* and *Malaviagnimitra* also convey the same message with the awareness of identification of the human with the eternal, the unique juxtaposition of terrestrial joy with divine ecstasy.

Kalidasa's view of life has, therefore, the poetic admixture of the sensual with the sublime, the earthly with the divine, the human with the godly. It transposes upon human condition the prospect of calm and clarity, and gives to all his readers a vision of true release beyond the Maya of human existence.

*

A lotus, even though covered with moss is charming; the spot though dark, heightens the beauty of the moon; this slender-bodied lady is more lovely even with her bark cloth; to sweet forms, what indeed, is not an embellishment?

Sakuntalam

Part Two

Advaitic Merit of *Sakuntalam*

RADHA SADASIVAN

"To touch the deepest chords of life and bring out the music of the souls"--that is the work of a supreme artist whose own soul is in tune with the great vibrations of life around.

Kalidasa is indisputably the greatest master mind in Sanskrit literature. Among *kavyas,* the drama is the most charming. Among dramas, the *Sakuntalam* is specially charming: *Kavyesu natakam ramyam tatra sakuntalam matam.*

Superb characterisation, judicious selection of theme, neat harmonisation of events, keen observation of human nature, perfect delineation of love, alluring treatment of nature, sweet and lucid diction, chaste style, simple melodious language, unartificial use of figures of speech, exuberance of imagination, refined presentation of the sacred and high ideals of Indian culture--all these have earned for Kalidasa an exalted place in the galaxy of world poets. His poetry is for all times and for all climes.

Praise of Siva

The benedictory stanza praises God Siva and invokes his blessings and protection. He manifests himself through his different forms for the support of the universe. The existence of that great power is inferred from his forms which are directly perceived *(pratyaksha).*

Baser material is transmuted into gold by passing through the crucible of the poet's imagination. Into the dry bones of the bare tale, the poet has breathed the life of poetry and lifted it from a story of passion into one of the most moving and ideal of loves.

As Tagore remarks, there are two unions in *Sakuntalam.* The central motif of the play is the progress from the early union with its youthful beauty and romance through an interval of intense separation and speechless agony. It leads to the ultimate union in the Elysian regions of eternal bliss.

The calm and quiet hermitage of sage Marica provides the proper setting for reunion. The two hearts meet where heaven and earth have met. They meet through their son, the eternal tie between the parents.

Poetic Insight

Dusyanta's repudiation scene is one of the most masterly in the whole range of literature. We clearly feel how the avalanche is loosened and moves inch by inch until, gathering force, it hurtles down with a tremendous force and crashes upon the dear head of the devoted Sakuntala.

The king denies having had anything to do with Sakuntala. He does not recognise her when her veil is removed, and by a fateful chance the ring of recognition has already been lost. When evidence (*pratyaksha pramana*) thus fails, poor Sakuntala makes the pathetic attempt of reviving the memory by verbal testimony (*sabda pramana*).

With rare poetic insight Kalidasa has declined to restore Sakuntala to Kanva's hermitage. It was impossible for her to live in harmony with the hermitage in the way she had done before. A mighty silence was now needed, worthy of the mighty grief of the mourner.

The union of Sakuntala and her boy Bharata with Dusyanta is of one "paradise" lost and another "paradise" regained. Translating the whole subject from one world to another is to elevate love from the sphere of physical beauty to the eternal heaven of moral perfection. The sudden gust of youthful impulse had in a moment given Sakuntala to

Dusyanta, but that was not the true winning of her. The best means of winning is by devotion, by *tapas*.

Therefore, the poet has made the two lovers undergo a long and austere *tapasya* in order that they may gain each other truly, eternally. There is a suggestion of the *jivatman* becoming one with *Paramatman* after undergoing a long and austere *tapasya*.

The following verses in the drama convey the feeling of the poet: *Satam hi sandehapadesu vastusu pramanam antahkarana pravrittaya.* (Act I, *sloka* 20) (In matters which are subject to dispute, the mental leanings of noble persons give the true verdict).

Manusisu katam va syat asya rupasya sambhava,
Na prabhataralam jyotirudeti vasudhatalat. (Act I, *sloka* 23)

(How could any woman give birth to such a lovely form? The light that sparkles with tremulous beams does not rise from the surface of the earth).

Token of Recognition

The word ring signifies a token of recognition which is instrumental in bringing about the final reunion of Sakuntala with the king. In all Vedantic works, the *sastra* has to be learnt from a guru. The ring serves like a guru for the king to recognise what he had forgotten due to Maya.

The last oft-quoted sloka of the drama (*Bharata-vakya*) says:

Pravartatam prakrutihitaya parthivah,
Sarasvati sruti mahatam mahiyatam,
Mamapi ca ksapayatu nilalohitah,
Punarbhavam parigatasaktiratmabhu.

(May the king exert himself for the good of his subjects. May

Sarasvati be honoured by the great. May the self-existent Siva, united with Shakti, avert rebirth).

"May Lord Siva put an end to my rebirth" is the highest ideal that a devout Hindu would aspire for. No wonder Kalidasa who has achieved aesthetic perfection in life finds nothing left in the world aspiring for. He prays for his own emancipation from *samsara* to become one with Brahman.

Lofty Ideals

The great German poet Goethe is known to the Sanskrit world for his poetic appreciation of the *Abhijnanasakuntalam* of Kalidasa. He says:

"Woulds't thou the young year's blossoms,
And the fruits of its decline,
And all by which the soul is charmed,
Woulds't thou the earth and heaven itself,
In one sole name combine?
I name thee O Sakuntala! And all at once is said."

The *Abhijnanasakuntalam* is the combination of earth and heaven. It contains the history of a development, the development of a flower into fruit, of matter into spirit. It is the perfection of Kalidasa's lofty ideals and it is the young year's blossoms which ripen into the mellow fruit of autumnal maturity.

The outer life is an exact reproduction of the inner. Spiritual life plays a tremendous part in the world. We may be attracted by a flower

and long to keep it always; but we cannot possess it if we sever it from its root. *Sakuntalam* is such a flower and can be truly appreciated only if what it inspires is remembered.

Smt. Radha Sadasivan is M.A. in Sanskrit, and has written articles for the "Bhavan's Journal" and "Tapovan Prasad."

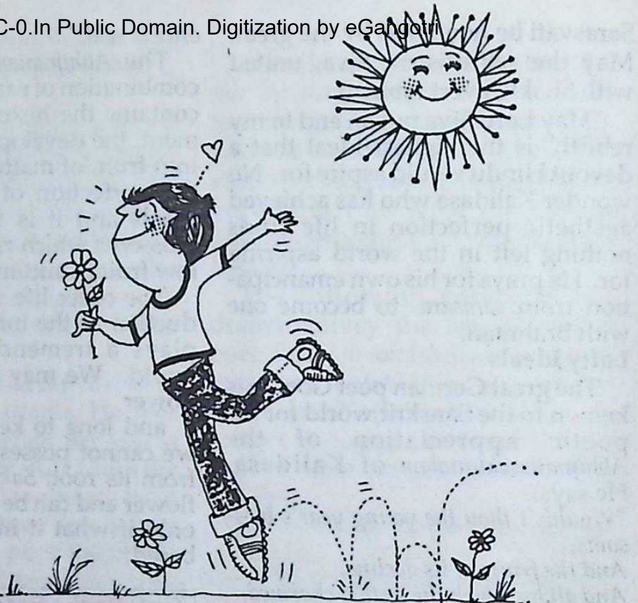
⁂

May the king engage for the benefit of his subjects. May the speech of Vedic scholars stand supreme. May the self-existent Lord Siva, who is half blue and half red in colour--the all powerful--put an end to my rebirth.

Trees bend down at the time of fruition. Clouds hang low with loads of fresh waters. Great souls are not haughty in opulence, thus is the nature of benefactors.

On seeing pleasant objects or hearing some mellifluous notes, a person is filled with vague sensations. He must be remembering certain affinities of the previous birth, an echo of firmly rooted impressions.

Sakuntalam



OH, TO BE YOUNG...

The ecstasy of it. The feeling of being on top of the world. Of shaping your future. Of planning to share life's best with your loved ones. Also, the right time to forecast the weather and prepare for a rainy day.

It is also the time to ensure that your plans are not affected by any "surprises" that the future might send your way. Life Insurance is the ideal way of having complete family security.

Find out more about it. Talk to an LIC agent or contact the nearest LIC office.

RADEUS/LIC/439-91

Life Insurance Corporation of India

There is no substitute for life insurance

Symbolism in *Meghaduta*

DR. T. NARAYANAN KUTTY

The genius of Kalidasa has been recongnised from early centuries in India. This article attempts to identify some symbolical expressions from his lyrical work *Meghaduta*. The story is related to the separation of a Yaksha from his wife and his request to the cloud to be a messager.

A certain Yaksha is condemned to banishment by his master Kubera for neglect of his duty. He takes up his abode at Ramagiri, in the Vindhya mountains. After spending eight months in solitude, he sees one day a cloud, huge as an elephant, resting on the peak of the mountain. Without considering the practicality of his act, he appeals to the cloud to be a messenger to his beloved, who is waiting for him far way in the city of Yakshas, named Alaka.

The Separated One

The poet does not feel the necessity to name the Yaksha. As the poem starts with the word *kaschit*, having its meaning as some one, it denotes the individual soul, whoever he may be, that has been separated from his beloved i.e. Paramatman.

The supreme Brahman is bliss itself. *Sruti* says: *Anandam Brahmano Vidvan (Taittiriya Upanishad), Anandam Brahmah (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad)*. The separation from the supreme soul causes grief. The *jivatma* feels separated from Paramatman by *avidya*. The separated one is mentally distressed. Though actually one is in the state of bliss, which is one's true nature, the individual soul is adjuncted to emotions, such as *soka, moha, and krodha*.

Likewise, the Yaksha suffers because of his separation and is mentally distressed at that stage. The word *kanta* (beloved one) is deliberately used by the poet, in preference to *bharata*, or any other word. The separation is unbearable because it is from his dearly loved supreme soul. This reminds one of the Upanishadic rendering: *Atmanastu kamaya patyuh priyo bhavati (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad)*.

As a result of this separation, he has also, due to ignorance, been dispossessed from his greatness. The exact word used by the poet is *astagamita mahima* (deprived of his greatness). It is explained that certain celestials enjoy *siddhis*, such as *anima, garima, and mahima*. But the Yaksha was deprived of these super-human powers.

The Competent Aspirant

The attainment of the supreme

Symbol of Chariot

Kalidasa's *Sakuntalam* is well-known for symbolical implications. For example, at the very opening of the drama, the incident of king Dusyanta's entrance is explained. I think this has been presented symbolically as of a *jivatma,* approaching *tapovanam* for spiritual gains. The *jivatma,* personified by Dusyanta, approaches the *tapovanam* of Kulapati Kanva for advice on realisation.

The chariot, in which he enters, has a symbolical representaion. The *Kathopanishad* presents the simile of a chariot as follows:

"*Atma* is the master of the chariot, the body is the chariot, but the intelligence is the charioteer and the mind is the reins. The horses are the senses."

soul is expressed by the word *parama purusaratha* (the highest goal of life). For this attainment, one has to study Vedanta. A competent student who is qualified to study Vedanta is called *adhikari*. Our Yaksha was not a competent student–*svadhikarat pramattah*. The definition of *adhikari* has been explained in *Vedantasara*.

"The competent student is an aspirant who, by studying in accordance with the prescribed method the Vedas and the Vedangas (the books auxiliary to the Vedas), has obtained a general comprehension of the entire Vedas. He is absolved from all sins in this or in a previous life by the avoidance of the actions known as *kamya* (rites performed with a view to attaining a desired object) and *nisiddha* (those forbidden in the scriptures).

"By the performance of actions called *nitya* (daily obligatory rites) and *naimittika* (obligatory on special occasions) as well as by penance and devotion, he has become entirely pure in mind. He has adopted the four *sadhanas* or means (*sadhanachatustaya*) for the attainment of spiritual knowledge."

Attachment to Pleasures

The Yaksha was attached to sensual pleasures. Therefore he was detached from the spiritual path. It is to be noted that the verbal meaning of the word Yaksha also denotes a man of sensual pleasures. See the definition: "Either they are loved by the Apsaras, or they love the pleasures of the sense organs."

Sensual pleasures are of the lowest type, among pleasures. The Upanishads teach: "The objects are superior to the senses. The mind is superior to the objects. The intellect is superior to the mind and the *Atma* is superior to the intellect. The unmanifested is superior to the *Atma* and *Purusha* is superior to the unmanifested. Nothing is superior to *Purusha*. That is the end. That is the supreme goal." (*Kathopanishad*)

The City of Alaka

In their city of Alaka, the Yakshas live in great joy equivalent to that of heaven. The tears flow only for joy grief is occasioned only by love, separation occurs only in love-quarrels. Youth is the state of life among the Yakshas. The trees bear perennial flowers. The peacocks display ever-resplendent plumage.

The evenings are always pleasant due to the presence of constant moonlight. All the year round, flowers of all seasons grow. The houses have treasures of unfailing wealth and are illumined by lamplike jewels ever shedding light. Beautiful garments and ornaments are supplied to women by the desire-granting tree (*kalpa-vriksha*).

The Purification

The Yaksha was degraded from such a life of joy to the low plane of sorrows, which is the earth. He took up his abode among the hermitages of Ramagiri. As the *Bhagavad Gita* says: "After having enjoyed heavenly worlds of larger facilities, when the reward of their good deeds is exhausted, they return to mortal existence."

The purpose of Yaksha was to attain sanctity again by taking abode in Ramagiri, as Rama lived in Ramagiri with his wife Sita and Lakshmana while in exile, and Sita gave sanctity to the waters of the mountains.

Beyond the Manasa Lake

The Yaksha visualised the cloud at the top of the mountain. It has a significance. The cloud is the personification of his mind. It is so presented throughout the poem. He makes use of it as a messenger knowing the verse in the *Sruti*, *manasaivanudrashtavyam*.

But his real destiny is beyond the Manasa lake. *Manasa* means something related to mind. He wanted to find that supreme realisation which is the stage beyond the mind. "I submit my petition to you" brings out the *saranagati* (surrender) of the Yaksha's mind. At the end, he has to wait for four more months before his eventual reunion with his beloved.

***Dr T. Narayanan Kutty** is Director, The Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute, Madras.*

⁂

Where is cloud, a composite of smoke, light, water and wind and where are the messages that can only be conveyed by living beings endowed with strong limbs? Without considering all this, the Yaksha in his eagerness to send the message to his beloved sought the cloud as a messenger. The love-stricken do not discriminate between what is sentient and what is not sentient.

I see your limbs in graceful creeping vines. In the eyes of the gentle deer, I see your glances. I see the lustre of thy face in the moon, your locks of hair in the peacock plumes and eyebrows in the ripples of the waves. But O jealous dame, I see nowhere the whole sweet image of thy total form.

Meghaduta

Advaitic Ideals in *Malavikagnimitra*

DR. S. RAMARATNAM

In the case of Atmavidya, absolute knowledge and the Self are not different. They are identical.

The present paper deals with the influence of Advaitic ideals on Kalidasa with particular reference to his play, *Malavikagnimitra.* This is a light-hearted comedy, describing the love story of king Agnimitra and a princess in exile, called Malavika. But the poet somehow finds scope to introduce Advaitic thoughts in the play.

The very first *sloka* of *Malvikagnimitra* is quite striking. "May that Lord Siva dispel your state of darkness (*tamasic vrtti*) so as to provide you with the perception of the righteous path--that Lord who, though in sole supremacy, is profusely fruitful to the reverent, is himself the wearer of the skin (of an elephant); who though possessed of a body completely united with his spouse, is yet the greatest of ascetics leading a life of strict celibacy; who though holding the entire universe by means of his eight limbs, is possessed of no egotism."

Necessity of Atmavidya

The Upanishads clearly distinguish between the eternal and non-eternal. The human body is perishable by nature. But the soul, the Atman is eternal. It is one without a second, *ekameva advitiyam*. It is devoid of parts and of activity.

The mind steeped in ignorance, *avidya*, fails to grasp the Atman. The study of scriptures helps one to get rid of *avidya* and attain true knowledge. *Vidya* or knowledge is primarily twofold: *(i)* absolute knowledge, and *(ii)* relative knowledge. *Atmavidya* or knowledge of the Self is the only one which can be called absolute. Knowledge of all other objects is relative or empirical.

With respect to relative knowledge, the knower is independent of the knowledge. But not so far as *atmavidya* is concerned. The Atman is the knower himself. It is not the thing to be known. In fact, it is even wrong to use the term "knowledge of the Self." In the case of *atmavidya*, absolute knowledge and the Self are not two different entities. They are identical. The Atman is the knowledge itself and is absolute.

An illustration can explain the point. The sugar adds sweetness to all other objects. But is another object required to sweeten the sugar itself? Sugar is a sweetening substance and it does not require another object to sweeten itself. Likewise, the Atman is the knower and is not a thing to be known.

A question may be raised here. If the Atman is the knower, then is the knowledge of the Self required at all? Why should one seek the knowledge of one's own Self? If I am the Self, why do I not realise it at all? It is indeed a paradoxical situation.

It is ignorance which prevents one from the realisation of the Self. An illustration may be given. An officer, about to leave his office, frantically searches for the office key. He asks all the persons and creates a panic. Suddenly, somebody points out that he is holding the key himself. He does not realise it for sometime.

Likewise, though one is Atman himself, one does not realise it. It needs proper guidance and training to attain the realisation of the Self. Once it is realised, there is complete bliss, *ananda*, and no misery. But the realisation cannot be attained all of a sudden. One should get detached from all worldly things.

It does not mean one should resort to the forest, shirking all responsibilities. Being in the world, one can remain detached like the water drops on a lotus leaf. This is what Kalidasa implies in the expression "*kanta sammisra dehopyavisaya manasam...*". in the first *sloka* of *Malavikagnimitra*.

In the first act of *Malvikagnimitra*, the poet while describing the queen refers to *atmavidya*. "Decked in auspicious attire and accompanied by Kausiki in the dress of an ascetic, she shines like the personification of the threefold Vedic lore assisted by the philosophy of the soul."

Everyone realises that one's own Self is more important than anything else in the world. The knowledge of the Self is likewise more important than any other knowledge. *Atmavidya tapomulam* (*Rg Veda*). Hence the importance of *atmavidya* and the necessity to attain that knowledge must be recognised.

Nature of Avidya

In the first *sloka* of *Malavikagnimitra* that we have seen, Kalidasa refers to the dispelling of *tamasic vrtti* which is nothing but *avidya* or ignorance. *Avidya* is the root cause of all problems of the world. The *Nasadiya sukta* of the *Rg Veda* says, "*Tama asit tamasa gulaham agre.*" Darkness (*tamas*) existed in the beginning. The darkness referred to here is only *avidya*. The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* says, "*Indro mayabhih puruhuta i yate.*" Indra (though one) is perceived as many due to ignorance.

"Just as those who do not know the field, walk again and again over the hidden treasure of gold and do not find it, even so all creatures go day after day into the world of Brahman and yet do not find it; for they are blinded by untruth (*anrtena*)." The word *anrta* here means *avidya*. The *Bhagavad Gita* says, "Knowledge is enveloped by ignorance, thereby mortals are deluded."

The *Svetasvatara Upanishad* says, "All this, the creator creates and the other (the created) is confined to Maya." It further says, "Know then that *prakriti* is Maya and the wielder of Maya is the great Lord."

Maya or *avidya* has the capacity to conceal the truth or the reality and project the unreal as the real. But Maya can be dispelled by the attainment of real knowledge, viz. knowledge of the Self.

The following scene from *Malavikagnimitra* brings out the nature of *avidya*. There is a discussion among two maid servants about a new ring that the queen has brought. One of them says, "By this ring bearing the mark of a serpent, which sends forth rays resembling tender leaves, your forearm looks as though it has put forth flowers."

It is a matter of common experience that, at times, in semi-darkness we mistake a rope for a snake. A sense of fear grips our heart. When the light is switched on, we realise that what we saw was not a snake. We had only mistaken a rope for a snake. How does this error happen?

Source of Error

The snake supposed to have been seen by the observer cannot be distant. It must be immediate. Otherwise he would not have experienced the sense of fear. It cannot also be an object of memory for the same reason. It (the snake) is also not a totally unreal object (*asat*) like the horn of a hare. Nor can it be real since it is negated in the subsequent cognition. It cannot be both real and unreal since it will be like having both darkness and light in one and the same place.

Therefore, we have to say that such a cognition is different from both the real and the unreal, *sadasad vilaksanam*. It is rather inexplicable (*anirvacaniya*). But it has not suddenly risen from nothingness. The rope is very much there. The snake has been superimposed on the rope which is already available.

According to the Advaitic theory, the world that we see is also an illusion like the snake that we see in a rope. There can be only one reality at the absolute level: that is the Brahman, the supreme Self. It is only one without a second. *Ekam eva advitiyam brahma.*

It is due to our ignorance that we consider the world as real. Actually, it is not. We see even at the ordinary level that all things concerned with the world are perishable by nature. They are therefore not real. What applies to the parts, must apply to the whole as well. So the entire universe has no absolute reality.

Even for the appearance of the illusory snake, there must be a substratum which must be real. That reality is called the Brahman. Brahman serves as the locus for *avidya*, which through modification, appears as the pluralistic universe. These ideas are implied in Kalidasa's *nagamudra* imagery.

Importance of Guru

Avidya or ignorance can be destroyed by the knowledge of the supreme Self which arises from the practice of the *sadhanas* or aids. They are the study (or listening) of the scriptures (*sravana*), rational reflection (*manana*), and single-minded contemplation (*nidhidhyasana*) on the Self. As a first step, an aspirant of the spiritual knowledge is expected to listen to the great truths expounded by a qualified spiritual teacher.

The traditional systems of Indian philosophy emphasise the importance of a preceptor, a guru, for every aspirant of *brahmajnana*. *Acaryavan puruso veda*. Only he who has a spiritual teacher is a complete man. In fact, the term guru itself is fully significant. It connotes that a guru alone can dispel the darkness of ignorance.

Kalidasa too emphasizes the importance of a guru in several places in *Malavikagnimitra*. "The learning of an instructor when imparted to a deserving pupil gains in eminence just as water, from the cloud falling into a sea-shell, becomes a pearl."

The process of attaining *atmavidya* is not an easy one. It is beset with numerous impediments in the form of worldly attractions and desires. It is therefore necessary to have proper guidance from a spiritual teacher who will help us in overcoming impediments.

"He who has assistance alone is competent to realise an object which has impediments. A person, though possessed of eyes, does not see an object in the darkness without the aid of a lamp."

By the grace of a teacher even an ordinary student may attain glory. This is hinted by Kalidasa. "By the sun's gift, the fire gets increased in refulgence. Favoured by the night, the moon also attains glory."

"Even a fool becomes enlightened by means of contact with a wise man, just as dirty water becomes pure by contact with the fruit capable of removing dirt."

With respect to the acquisition of *atmajnana*, age has no relevance at all. A person may get it at a very young age, even without going through the prescribed texts. Yet there may be another who may be studying the Vedantic texts till the ripe old age but still may not get *atmajnana*, if his mind is ravaged by desires and attachments.

This idea has been hinted by Kalidasa when he says, "Everything need not be good just because it is old..." An aspirant of *atmajnana*, young or old, is expected to develop a sense of detachment (*vairagya*) from all worldly pleasures, as the first step towards the ultimate goal.

***Dr. S. Ramaratnam** is Head of the Post-graduate and Research Department of Sanskrit, Vivekananda College, Madras.*

❄

Natya in *Malavikagnimitra*

R. ASHA

Kalidasa shows a great insight into the art of dance which, in Indian mythology, is a form of worship of the gods, apart from being a pleasing ritual to the eyes.

Refined expression of the aesthetic sense of man constitutes art. Art is the medium through which man gives expression to his sentiments. Through the years, the term 'art' has become almost inseparably linked with 'beauty' So goes the saying, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

In our ancient literary works, arts are enumerated to be 64 in number. Music and dance (*natya*) occupy a very prominent position. It may be because of their ability to penetrate easily into the very depths of our being and evoke the latent impressions.

Natya, an Offering

Natya was looked upon, not merely as an art, but as an offering, verily, a sacrifice to the Gods, as it was a pleasing ritual to their eyes. It was, in fact, a form of worship of the Gods.

At the instance of Lord Siva and Uma, the art of dancing was incorporated. In Indian mythology, Lord Siva is inseparably linked with the cosmic dance. He is hailed as Nataraja, the Lord of dancers.

Ardhanarisvara

Kalidasa makes a reference to manifestation of the Lord as Ardhanarisvara, wherein there is the fusion of both the male and the female. This fusion is likened to that between a word and its meaning in the invocatory verse of his *Raghuvamsa*, *vagarthavivasampriktau*.

Again, in the invocatory stanza of his *Malavikagnimitra*, he uses the phrase *kantasammisradeha* while referring to the Lord. Lord Siva represents the *tandava* or the vigorous type of dance, while Parvati, the *lasya* or the graceful type. Fusion of these two leads to a unified whole.

Rasa and Bhava

Thought, action and speech of man are regulated by the nine-fold sentiments or *rasas* in him, which in turn have for their basis, the proportionate presence of the three *gunas*, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. The nine *rasas* are *sringara*, *hasya*, *karuna*, *raudra*, *vira*, *bhayanaka*, *bibhatsa*, *adbhuta*, and *santa* (though Bharata admits only the first eight). *Natya* characterises these sentiments and passions of man.

Natya is very much a practical art. As Kalidasa puts it, *prayoga pradhanam hi natyasastram*. The word *prayoga* is taken to refer to the fourfold *abhinaya*, namely *angika*, *vacika*, *aharya*, and *sattvika*, which go to make up *natya*.

Natya in Kalidasa's Time

During Kalidasa's time, *natya* had evolved scientifically and systematically. It was held in high reverence and was considered a family heritage. Certain sections of people devoted their entire time to the practice and exposition of this art. Further, it required intensive training and perseverance on the part of the disciple and the teacher to perfect it.

Kalidasa makes a reference, *paramanipuna medhavini ca*, to Malavika's training in dance in the *Malavikagnimitra*, Malavika was highly skilled and was able to grasp the intricacies quickly. Whichever gesture or movement was taught to her, she perfected it, by improving upon it, thus excelling her teacher in the process.

Role of teacher

Regarding the teacher, Kalidasa has the following comment to make. The teacher should not only be proficient in the art, but also must possess the ability to effectively impart it to his disciples. He should also exercise utmost care in the selection of his disciples.

If a teacher selects a dull-witted pupil, it would only bring ignominy for him. On the other hand, if the teacher imparts his art to an intelligent and deserving pupil, it will bring fame to him and his art will attain greater excellence, just as water from a cloud is transformed into a pearl, when it fails on a seashell.

Malavika was an excellent pupil, fit to receive instruction in the fine arts, *silpadhikara iyam yogya darika*. In fact, when the king Agnimitra sees her for the first time, he remarks, *aho sarvasthananavadyatarupasya.* It was as if her body was framed explicity for the purpose of dance.

Grace in Natya

The concept of grace is an integral part of *natya*. Kalidasa refers to it when he introduces Malavika as *anugasaustava malavika*. The term *saustava* refers to grace. Elegance of the body is one of the essential features of a dancer. Every movement must be executed with spontaneous grace and every part of the dancer's body must be proportionately attuned to it.

Malavika's whole body was imbued with grace. Every gesture, every movement of hers even if it was an ordinary one, was spontaneously graceful. At the end of her performance, when she was about to leave, she was asked to stay. She unconsciously turned around a little and stood in so graceful a posture that it evinced a remark from the king. This grace was spontaneous in her and not extraneous.

Facets of Natya

One commentator explains the five varieties of acting as *nritta, kaivara, dharmara, vagada* and *gita*. Otherwise, this could allude to the five-limb movement wherein the five parts of the body viz., mind, eye, eyebrows, hands and feet, are employed.

There are also references to a variety of dance called *calita*. In this, the dancer, while acting the part of another, gives expression thereby to her own sentiments. The phrase *layamadhya* is explained as *layena talakalena madhya madhyalayayukta*. *Laya* means tala in music. It is of three kinds: *druta, madhya* and *vilambita*. This composition (*calita*) was probably to be sung in medium time. A particular pace was used especially for songs portraying the sentiment of love.

Malavika excelled herself in the portrayal of this dance. Every gesture or movement of any limb in her body was by itself eloquent and self-explanatory. Her limbs were expressive as if they had the very words concealed in them. She also was totally absorbed in the portrayal of the sentiments. An absence of total involvement will affect the portrayal of that particular *rasa*.

Malavika could spontaneously and delicately express the required sentiments by means of her hand-gestures. She could beautifully depict the sentiment of love in its various shades, such as despair, joy mixed with surprise, anxiety and despondency successively. Malavika's performance was thus flawless and well- applauded.

One can gain an insight into the versatile mind of the great poet-genius Kalidasa, as he was quite conversant with the *Natya Sastra*. It is an extra tribute to his genius that he was able to skillfully blend it within the purview of his drama, the *Malavikagnimitra*.

__R. Asha__ is Research Scholar, Department of Sanskrit, University of Madras, Madras.

☆

Place of Origin

We do not know for certain from which place Kalidasa hailed. His name indicates that he belonged to Bengal where the worship of Kali is more prevalent than in any other part of India. Again, the poet describes Kashmir and Himalayan regions so graphically that one is led to believe that he belonged to the Himalayan region. However, his detailed description of small hills and rivulets in the Malva region, his advice to Megha (cloud messenger) to deviate a little and visit Ujjayini *(Meghaduta, 1-27)*, and a reference to Vidisheshwara in *Malavikagnimitra* go to indicate that Kalidasa must have lived a greater part of his life in central and northern India.

We find that Kalidasa is partial to Vidarbha region since he mentions bride's costumes as per Vidarbha style *(Malavikagnimitra)*. His mention of Ramagiri in *Meghaduta* (Ramateka near Nagpur) goes to indicate his connection with Vidarbha. His literary style *(Vaidarbhi)* also betrays his affinity with Vidarbha.

*(Extracted from R. D. Karmarkar's "**Kalidasa**".)*

Advaitic Values in *Naandi Slokas*

DR. V. ABIRAMA SUNDARAM

One who is self-controlled, serene, free from desires, concentrated and possessing fortitude, can see the Supreme Self in his own self.

Kalidasa has handed down to us two epics, three dramas and two lyrics of exceptional beauty. His knowledge was encyclopaedic for his age. He has written of war and peace, of life in the raw as well as in the sublime. He has viewed every pleasure and pain, elation and frustration, love and hatred, with detachment and compassion.

In his attitude towards religion, Kalidasa was never a fanatic or a violent partisan of a particular sect or creed. Some scholars feel that he was a staunch Saivite. But even if it is so, he never carried his Saivism to the extent of traducing or disparaging Vaisnavism or other sects.

All Gods are One

It is significant that he has impartially composed panegyrics to all the three manifestations of the Supreme Being, that is Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. In *Kumarasambhava*, the second canto begins with the eulogy of one called *Trimurti* who comprises within himself the three fundamental cosmic qualities, namely *sattva, rajas* and *tamas,* although he was a single entity in the beginning of the creation.

It is true that in the benedictory verses of his dramatic compositions, the deity which is invoked is Lord Siva. But in all the three verses, he has clearly expressed his belief that there is only one Supreme Being who is eternal, real and all-pervading

The Upanishads, while speaking about the nature of Almighty, observe that, "The Supreme Self is only one without a second." (*Chhandogyopanishad* VI-2-1). "In the beginning verily, all these were *Atman* alone. There was nothing else existing as a rival." (*Aitareyopanishad* I-1-2). *Sadevasaumya idamagra asit*(*Chhandogyopanishad* VI-2-1).

Rg Veda also says, "The reality is only one but the learned speak of many forms." In *Bhagavad Gita*, the Lord says that there is no entity other than him. (*Gita*, VIII-7)

All these statements stand testimony to the fact that there is only one entity, which is real and eternal.

Sarvatah pani padam tat sarvato aksisiromukham,
Sarvatah srtimalloke sarvamavrtya tisthati. (*Gita* XIII-13)

Eightfold Nature

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Lord says that the earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intellect, and the ego are nothing but his distinct eightfold nature.

Bhumirapo analo vayuh kham mano buddhirevaca,
Ahamkara itiyam me bhinna prakrtirastadha. (*Gita, VII-* 4)

Mundakopanishad (II 1-3,4) says that "From Him are born life, mind, senses, ether, air, fire, water and earth that support all" and also adds that "The sun and moon are His eyes." "The *jiva* in the world of living beings is nothing but an eternal part of myself" says the Lord in *Bhagavad Gita* (XV-7).

These views are precisely presented in the *Naandi sloka* of *Abhijnanasakuntalam* by Kalidasa.

"May the Lord protect you, the Lord endowed with eight visible forms, namely the one that represents the first creation of the creator (water), the one which transports the materials duly offered in the fire (fire), the one which represents the sacrificer (soul), the two which create time (sun and moon), the one which being imbued with the quality capable of being heard by ear stands pervading the universe (ether), the one which wise men declare as the root cause of all elements (earth), and the one by which living beings are animated by life (air)."

Seeker of Salvation

In *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, it is explained that one who is self-controlled, serene, free from desires, concentrated and possessing fortitude can see the Supreme Self in his own self.

The references indicate that one can reach the highest abode by directing all his senses towards his inner Self by withdrawing the same from the sensual objects. These ideas are very elegantly grouped and presented by Kalidasa in the *Naandi sloka* of *Vikramorvasiya*, (I-1).

"May that Siva (the eternal one), easily accessible through the application of firm devotion, contribute to your highest bliss, he whom the seers declare in *Vedanta* as the one person that stands pervading the heaven and earth, in whom the epithet *Isvara* (supreme ruler) is true to the letter in meaning the exclusion of all others, and who is sought for in the innermost heart by persons, bent on reaching salvation, having controlled their *prana* and other vital organs."

In the *Naandi sloka* of *Malavikagnimitra*, Kalidasa indicates some of the pre-requisites for the seeker of salvation.

The first line, "He who though situated in sole supremacy profoundly fruitful to the reverent, is himself the wearer of the skin (of an elephant)", suggests the quality of contentment. Through the second line, "Who though possessed of a body completely united with his spouse, transcends the ascetics whose minds are proof against sensuous appetite", Kalidasa expresses his view that control of senses or *indriya nigraha* is the essential quality of the seeker. The other important quality, namely, detachment is suggested through the third line, "Who though holding the entire universe by means of eight limbs, is possessed of no egotism."

Thus Kalidasa, through his *Naandi slokas*, expresses his firm conviction and belief in the values of Advaita .

Dr V. Abirama Sundaram works in Department of Sanskrit, R.K.M. Vivekananda College, Madras.

*

Tagore on Kalidasa

India, in the time of Kalidasa, appeared to have reached the zenith of civilisation, excelling as she did in luxury, literature and the arts. But from the poems of Kalidasa, it is evident that this very magnificence of wealth and enjoyment worked against the ideal that sprang and flowed forth from the solitude of the forest.

These poems contain the voice of warnings against the gorgeous unreality of that age, which like a Himalayan avalanche, was slowly gliding down to an abyss of catastrophe. And from his seat beside all the glories of Vikramaditya's thróne, the poet's heart yearns for the purity and simplicity of India's past age of spiritual striving. And it was this yearning which impelled him to go back to the annals of the ancient kings of Raghu's line for the narrative poem, in which he traced the history of the rise and fall of the ideal that should guide the rulers of men.

Kalidasa, in almost all his works, represented the unbounded impetuousness of kingly splendour on the one side, and serene strength of regulated desires on the other.

(From "Glorious Thoughts of Kalidasa", edited by N. B. Sen, and published in 1966 by New Book Society of India, New Delhi.)

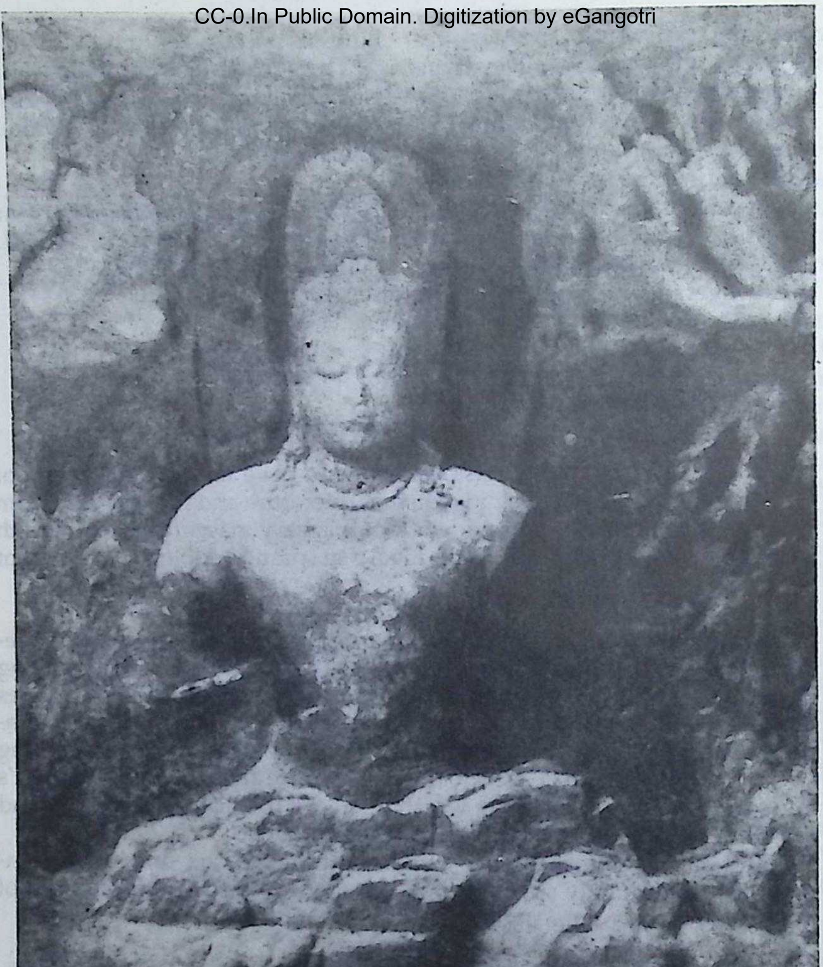
*

Kalidasa in *Vikramorvasiya*

Remember that the sight of the streak of lightning is preceded by the row of clouds.

Valour indeed shines by modesty.

A faint heart will never be blessed with good fortune.



Siva Yogesvara, Vakataka, 5th century A.D., Elephanta.

Kalidasa's Ideas as Reflected in Sculpture

V. MAITHREYI

Beauty appears primarily from nature in a pretty flower, a rugged mountain, or a glorious sunset. This is natural beauty, the divine creation. Artistic beauty proceeds from man in a fine painting, a graceful statue, an elegant home, or soul-stirring music. Works of art show great variety because human beings differ in their taste or appreciation of beauty.

Beauty and the Senses

The feeling of beauty results from the cooperation of a number of powers. Our senses, especially our eyes and ears, are the powers of perception. The mind, however, plays the most important part. It alone recognises the beauty that lies beyond what we see, hear or feel. Memory stores up these impressions until the creative imagination conceives them in a new order, ready to give birth to artistic expression.

Great art can and should bring spiritual enchantment. Art leads to understanding by the mind, and enjoyment by the heart and soul. It helps to lead the human being from tangible perception to spiritual understanding and love, from beauty to truth and goodness.

Kalidasa's Contribution

Artistic expression was not so developed during the time of Kalidasa. But many of the sculptures seem to have been directly inspired by the immortal lines of Kalidasa. To enumerate in detail their indebtedness to him is too great a subject. We shall attempt to detail some of the sculptural beauties which the lovers of Kalidasa have contemplated on.

***Fig. 1. Siva Yogesvara(Kumarasa mbhava* III 45, 46, 50--Page 42).**

Siva as Yogesvara is portrayed by Kalidasa as the great ascetic. Kalidasa is eloquent in describing this magnificant form of Siva.

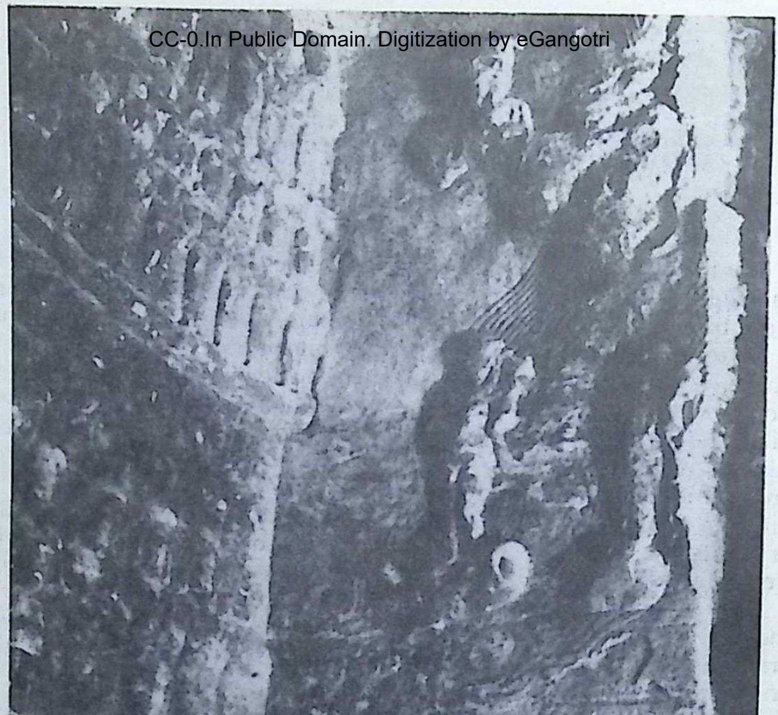
The hand is placed in such a way that the palms rest over one another on his lap like lotuses together. He is seated in the *Virasana,* with the *yogapatta* holding his legs in position.

The mass of locks are tied up with a reptile string; the beads of rosary twist around the ear; the brow is still; the sight is concentrated downwards on the tip of the nose.

The entire figure puts forward the idea of the Yogesvara holding within himself all movements under perfect control. The posture puts forth the conception by Kalidasa of Siva, the ascetic, who is contemplating on himself within himself.

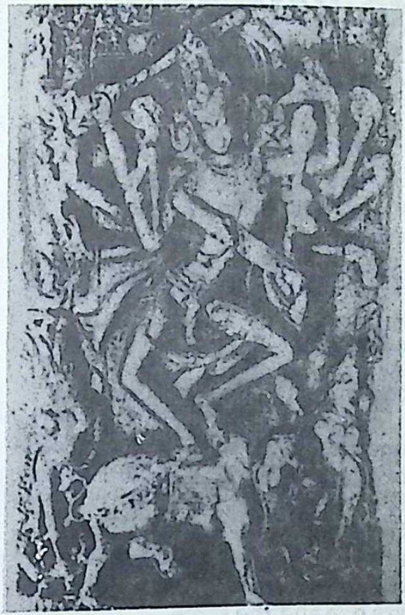
***Fig. 2 Siva flanked by Ganga and Yamuna (Kumarasambhava* VII - 42)**

We see the *Nartana* Siva



Sangam of Ganga and Yamuna at Prayaga, Gupta, Udayagiri, Central India.

COURTESY: OKASA LTD., 12 GUNBOW STREET, BOMBAY 400 001.
Tel: 261 1206/261 6220, Fax: (9122) 262 0538.



Natesvara, Pala, 10th century A.D., Dacca Museum.

being flanked by Ganga and Yamuna. Almost in all the gateways of the Gupta and Vakata temples, this feature is found.

Fig. 3. Ganga and Yamuna Confluence (Raghuvamsa XIII 54- 58-- Page 44).

The sanctifying power of Ganga to release one from the bondages of birth and death is extolled by Kalidasa. The confluence of the two great streams, Ganga and Yamuna, is depicted in sculpture which is found in Udayagiri. There is also festivity shown near the stream. The flying divine being suggests the immortality attained by a bath in these sacred streams. The *Prayaga kshetra* has assumed much importance in sculpture after the reference by Kalidasa.

Fig. 4. Devi at Tapas (Kumarasa mbhava V 20)

The penance of Parvati amidst five fires is described by Kalidasa in a telling way. Stationed in the middle of the four blazing fires, and concentrating her eyes on the solar arc, she is portrayed as absorbing the highest light of supreme knowledge from the sun. This theme is found sculptured at Ellora belonging to the Vakataka dynasty. It also has portrayed the holiest of sages who go to meet her, the embodiment of the *tapas*.

Parvati in penance, Vakataka, 5th cen tury A.D., Rameswara cave, Ellora.

Miss V. Maithreyi is M.A. in Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Madras, Madras. ***Courtesy (Figures): Dr. C. Sivara mamurti, "Ethical Fragrance in Indian Art and Literature"***

Backgrounds to Paintings Based on Kalidasa's Works

ARUNDHATI VARTAK

*

Cover Painting: Lord Siva and Saptarishis

(Based on *Kumarasambhava*)

Lord Siva asks *saptarishis* (the seven sages) to request Himavan of the Himalayas to give him his daughter Parvati in marriage.

The *rishis* praise Siva and say to him, "Thou art seen visibly but we do not know thee in real form. Be kind. Reveal thyself. Thou art not in the range of natural intellects.

"Is your form the same by which you create the universe? Or is that by which you preserve it? Or is it the one by which you destroy it? Which of these is it?"

It is significant that the *saptarishis* in *Kumarasambhava* do not insist on getting a definite answer to their question from Lord Siva. As Sri Adi Sankara has said, Maya (the power by which the Lord creates the universe) is known as *anirvachaniya* (indescribable). All the same, the *rishis* are respected by Siva for their sincere efforts to attain knowledge.

Kalidasa has tried to answer the question of the *saptarishis* in *sloka* 44 of Chapter VII in *Kumarasambhava*. He points out that the roles of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver and Siva the destroyer, keep changing, though ultimately they are one and the same.

In this painting, Siva, is depicted as the prospective bridegroom, as a young and radiant looking *yogin*. Hence the prominent tree-trunk in the foreground which Siva has used as his seat for meditation. In the background is the Mahakoshi waterfall near which the Lord expected the *rishis* to return after having met Himavan.

Lord Siva is also shown pressing the head of the proverbially arrogant Nandi, the bull, to make him bow to the *saptarishis*.

Miss Arundhati Vartak, a graduate of Bombay University, has held exhibitions of miniature paintings based on Kalidasa's works in Bombay, Nagpur, and Ujjain. She has contributed designs and paintings for programmes of various social organisations, as well as articles on nature and art to leading newspapers.

Unity of Man and Nature

(A painting based on Meghaduta--Page 57)

Kalidasa was well-versed in Vedic and classical Indian literature. To him, human beings and the natural world were manifestations of the supreme power Brahman.

No wonder that in his works we often find birds, animals, trees and also the five natural forces (fire, water, etc.), augmenting the joys and sorrows of human characters. It has been said that in his *Ritusamhara*, the entire earth appears like a woman in love!

Even when the seemingly contrasting elements in nature (size, character or colour) are poised against each other, they seem to awaken and enhance the latent charm in the opposite!

The black and white combination in Kalidasa's works often reminds one of the unity of *Purusha* and *Prakriti*. It may be a simple description of a fair face of a lady partially covered by her own black hair hanging loosely, or a greedy black bee hovering around a white *kunda* flower, or even a white foamy sea-shore encircled by the dark-leaved cinnamon trees!

In this painting based on *Meghaduta*, we find rows of cranes flying high in enchanting formations against the majestic backdrop of a dark monsoon cloud. This is not just a play of light and dark shades, but carries a much deeper meaning.

The north-bound cranes are enjoying a favourable breeze and so does the cloud. The sweet and auspicious song of the *Chataka* bird provides encouragement necessary for continuing the arduous journey upto the lake Manasa.

The female cranes, flying after their experience of the pleasure of conception (as monsoon is associated with their gestation period), are hastening to accompany the dark cloud on its long and lonely journey.

Kalidasa has compared the colour of the cloud to the complexion of Lord Siva and Vishnu, thus elevating its status to the highest level.

Arundhati Vartak

✸

The lotus retains not its beauty on the disappearance of the sun.

Those that are sorely affected by love are naturally incapable of distinguishing between objects sentient and insentient.

Meghaduta

King Dilip and the Lion

(A painting based on Raghuvamsa--Page 64)

King Dilip had taken the holy cow Nandini for grazing as usual.

Nandini approaches a cavern where she finds juicy grass growing in the vicinity of a waterfall. While king Dilip is engrossed in the picturesque beauty of the landscape, a lion suddenly jumps on Nandini.

Dilip quickly realising the situation tries to draw an arrow from his quiver. To his surprise, he finds himself unable to move. The lion, however, explains to him in a human voice that he is no ordinary beast. He calls himself Kumbhodara, a servant of Lord Siva, and says that he was on special duty to protect Parvati's favourite pine tree from wild elephants. Since the cow had entered his domain, he had a right to eat her and no one can stop him from doing so.

Dilip cannot bear the thought of letting Nandini die in front of him and offers his own body to the lion. The lion refuses to leave Nandini. (The miraculous lion was actually an illusion created by Nandini herself to test Dilip's devotion).

During his argument with the lion, king Dilip is on the horns of a dilemma: whether to succumb to the wishes of the servant of Lord Siva whom he adores, or protect the holy cow--the wealth of his preceptor *rishi* Vasishtha who keeps the sacrificial fire burning.

Finally, Dilip asks Siva's attendant to take his own body as he had less concern with his mortal frame than with his reputation as a duty-bound king.

Arundhati Vartak

✹

Where is the race that originates from the sun? Where is my limited talent? Out of infatuation, I intend to cross the sea with a raft, a sea very difficult to cross.

All remedies avail only if a residue of life is left.

Instruction, indeed imparted to a worthy recipient, shows good result.

A transgression in the worship of one deserving worship impedes welfare.

Raghuvamsa

Part Three

॥ त्रिमूर्तिस्तोत्रम् ॥

Trimurti Stotram

(In Praise of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva)

Kalidasa recognised the unity of the Supreme Reality, yet he composed numerous verses in praise of the *Trimurti*. These verses have been culled from *Kumarasambhava* (2, 4-15) in praise of Brahma, *Raghuvamsa* (X, 16-23) in praise of Vishnu, and *Kumarasambhava* (6, 21-23 amd 6,77) in praise of Siva. Taken together they form the *Trimurti Stotram*.

॥ ब्रह्मा स्तुतिः ॥

Brahma Stuti

(From *Kumarasambhava*)

नमस्त्रिमूर्तये तुभ्यं प्राक्सृष्टेः केवलात्मने।
गुणत्रयविभागाय पश्चाद्भेदमुपेयुषे॥

Salutation to you of three forms, the only entity before the creation, that resorts to differentiation for the division into the three constituents. (2, 4)

यदमोघमपामन्तरुप्तं बीजमज त्वया।
अतश्चराचरं विश्वं प्रभवस्तस्य गीयसे॥

O Unborn one, since by you the fruitful seed has been sown into the waters, therefore is born this universe--movable and immovable. Hence you are glorified as its cause. 2, 5

तिसृभिस्त्वमवस्थाभिर्महिमानमुदीरयन्।
प्रलयस्थितिसर्गाणामेकः कारणतां गतः॥

Displaying your greatness by the three forms you alone are the cause of destruction, maintenance and creation. (2, 6)

स्त्रीपुंसावात्मभागौ ते भिन्नमूर्तेः सिसृक्षया।
प्रसूतिभाजः सर्गस्य तावेव पितरौ स्मृतौ॥

The male and female are but your parts, with your form broken up with a desire to procreate. They alone are considered as the parents of this creation, which has gained existence. (2, 7)

स्वकालपरिमाणेन व्यस्तरात्रिंदिवस्य ते।
यौ तु स्वप्नावबोधौ तौ भूतानां प्रलयोदयौ॥

The sleep and the waking conditions of yours, divided into day and night by the unit of your own time, are the destruction and creation of things. (2,8)

जगद्योनिरयोनिस्त्वं जगदन्तो निरन्तकः।
जगदादिरनादिस्त्वं जगदीशो निरीश्वरः॥

You without origin are the origin of the world; without any end, you are the end of this universe; without any beginning, you are the beginning of this creation; and without any overlord, you are the overlord of all this. (2,9)

आत्मानमात्मना वेत्सि सृजस्यात्मानमात्मना।
आत्मना कृतिना च त्वमात्मन्येव प्रलीयसे॥

You know yourself by your own Self; create yourself by your own Self; become one with yourself by your own potent Self. (2,10)

द्रवः संघातकठिनः स्थूलः सूक्ष्मो लघुर्गुरुः।
व्यक्तो व्यक्तेतरश्चासि प्राकाम्यं ते विभूतिषु॥

You are fluid and solid (as a) full compact mass, gross and subtle, light and heavy, manifest and otherwise (i.e. not manifest). In your supernatural powers you have unrestricted freedom. (2, 11)

उद्घातः प्रणवो यासां न्यायैस्त्रिभिरुदीरणम्।
कर्म यज्ञः फलं स्वर्गस्तासां त्वं प्रभवो गिराम्॥

You are the source of the speech which has the Pranava (i.e. Omkara) as its beginning, which is uttered in manifold ascents, whose rite is the sacrifice and whose objective is heaven. (2, 12)

त्वामाप्नन्ति प्रकृतिं पुरुषार्थप्रवर्तिनीम्।
तद्दर्शिनमुदासनिं त्वामेव पुरूषं विदुः॥

They declare you as Prakriti which evolves to fulfill the purpose of Purusha, and they know you alone as Purusha observing indifferently Prakriti. (2,13)

त्वं पितृणामपि पिता देवानामपि देवता।
परतोऽपि परश्चासि विधाता वेधसामपि॥

You are the father of the Manes, the deity of the deities, higher than high (things), and the creator of the creators. (2, 14)

त्वमेव हव्यं होता च भोज्यं भोक्ता च शाश्वतः।
वेद्यं च वेदिता चासि ध्याता ध्येयं च यत्परम्॥

You are the oblation and the sacrificer; the object to be enjoyed and the permanent enjoyer; the thing to be known and the knower; the contemplator and highest object to be contemplated. (2,15)

॥ विष्णु स्तुतिः ॥

Vishnu Stuti

(From *Raghuvamsa*)

नमो विश्वसृजे पूर्वं विश्वं सदनु बिभ्रते।
अथ विश्वस्य संहर्त्रे तुभ्यं त्रेधास्थितात्मने॥१॥

I bow to thee, O Lord, who remainest in three-fold form--being the creator of universe, then the upholder of it and last of all, being its destroyer. (X,16)

रसान्तराण्येकरसं यथा दिव्यं पयोश्नुते।
देशे देशे गुणेष्वेवमवस्थास्त्वमविक्रियः॥२॥

As the rain water which has but originally one taste obtains a diversity of flavours (assumes different tastes) in different parts of the countries, so thou who art immutable, assumest different conditions when connected with different qualities of sattva, rajas and tamas. (X,17)

अमेयो मितलोकस्त्वमनर्थी प्रार्थनावहः।
अजितो जिष्णुरत्यन्तमव्यक्तो व्यक्तकारणम्॥३॥

O Lord! Immeasurable as thou art, thou hast measured all the worlds; indifferent to all desires, thou grantest desires of all; unconquered thyself, thou art conquering; thyself imperceptible, thou art the cause of the perceptible world. (X,18)

हृदयस्थमनासन्नमकामं त्वां तपस्विनम्।
दयालुमनवस्पृष्टं पुराणमजरं विदुः ॥४॥

O Lord! The sages declare thee to be present in the heart (of all) and yet not near (to comprehension); free from desires yet thou art an ascetic; compassionate yet not affected by grief; old, yet not subject to decay. *(X,19)*

सर्वज्ञस्त्वमविज्ञातः सर्वयोनिस्त्वमात्मभूः।
सर्वप्रभुरनीशस्त्वमेकस्त्वं सर्वरूपभाक् ॥५॥

Though omniscient thou art thyself unknown; though the source of all thou art self-existent (thyself uncreate); thou the Lord of all, art thyself without any superior; thou art one and yet assumest all forms. *(X,20)*

सप्तसामोपगीतं त्वां सप्तार्णवजलेशयम्।
सप्तार्चिर्मुखमाचख्युः सप्तलोकैकसंश्रयम् ॥६॥

They have declared thee, O Lord, to be the sole refuge (or one support) of the seven worlds, resting in the waters of seven oceans; thou hast been sung in the seven Samans and hast (seven-flamed) fire for thy mouth (introduction to thee is through Agni alone). *(X, 21)*

चतुर्वर्गफलं ज्ञानं कालावस्था चतुर्युगा।
चतुर्वर्णमयो लोकस्त्वत्तः सर्वं चतुर्मुखात् ॥७॥

From thee, having four mouths, have sprung the knowledge resulting in the group of four ends (purposes) of life, the arrangement (division) of time into the four cycles, and the people consisting of the four castes. *(X,22)*

अभ्यासनिगृहीतेन मनसा हृदयाश्रयम्।
ज्योतिर्मयं विचिन्वन्ति योगिनस्त्वां विमुक्तये ॥८॥

With minds withdrawn from external objects, yogis striving for liberation constantly think of you, full of effulgence, as seated in the heart. *(X, 23)*

॥ शिवस्तुतिः ॥

Siva Stuti

(From *Kumarasambhava*)

या नः प्रीतिर्विरूपाक्ष त्वदनुध्यानसंभवा।
सा किमावेद्यते तुभ्यमन्तरात्मासि देहिनाम् ॥६-२१ ॥

O Virupaksha, must we declare our love to you which is born of meditation on you? You are indeed the one, who is the soul residing in the inner precincts of all the embodied ones. (6, 21)

साक्षाद् दृष्टोऽसि न पुनर्विद्मस्त्वां वयमञ्जसा।
प्रसीद कथयात्मानं न धियां पथि वर्तसे ॥६-२२॥

Thou art seen visibly but we do not know thee in thy real form. Be kind. Reveal thyself. Thou art not within the range of natural intellects. (6, 22)

किं येन सृजसि व्यक्त मुत येन बिभर्षि तत्।
अथ विश्वस्य संहर्ता भागः कतम एष ते ॥६-२३॥

Is your form the same by which you create the universe? Or is it that by which you preserve it? Or is it the one by which you destroy it? Which of these is it? (6, 23)

योगिनो यं विचिन्वन्ति क्षेत्राभ्यन्तरवर्तिनम्।
अनावृत्तिभयं यस्य पदमाहुर्मनीषिणः ॥६-७७ ॥

The yogis look for Him who is residing in every body. The wise say that His feet remove the fear of being born. (6,77)

* * *

Thou art the Light of lights such as the sun, moon and the fire. From Parabrahman to the worm, you apportion their joys. In the threefolds of your belly, is enveloped the whole universe--from the earth to Siva. Yet, it is a wonder, you flash in the heart of your devotee!

Your body is made of immeasurable majesty and supreme bliss. Your nature is of unfaltered wisdom and unending compassion. You are the matrix of all creation. Whether you grant the salvation or plunge me into a series of births, I shall worship only Thee!

Kalidasa in Sakala Janani Stavam

Praise of Vishnu

(Raghuvamsa)

O Thou who didst create this All,
Who dost preserve it, lest it fall,
Who wilt destroy it and its ways--
To Thee, O Triune Lord, be praise.

As into heavens, waters run
The tastes of earth--yet it is one.
So Thou art all the things that range
The universe, yet dost not change.

Far, far removed, yet ever near,
Untouched by passion, yet austere;
Sinless, yet pitiful of heart;
Ancient, yet free from age - Thou art.

Though uncreate, Thou seekest birth,
Dreaming, Thou watchest heaven and earth,
Passionless, smitest low Thy foes,
Who knows Thy nature, Lord, who knows?

Though many different paths, O Lord,
May lead us to some great reward,
They gather and are merged in Thee
Like floods of Ganges in the sea.

The saints who give Thee every thought,
Whose every act for Thee is wrought,
Yearn for Thine everlasting peace
For bliss with Thee that cannot cease.

Like pearls that grow in ocean's night,
Like sunbeams radiantly bright,
Thy strange and wonder-working ways
Defeat extravagance of praise.

If songs that to Thy glory tend
Should weary grow or take an end,
Our impotence must bear the blame
And not Thine unexhausted name.

A. W. Ryder

Tattvāloka

THE SPLENDOUR OF TRUTH

A Gift of Timeless Teachings

Please send a gift subscription for ☐ 1 year; ☐ 2 years, to:

NAME ____________________

ADDRESS ____________________

____

CITY ____________ STATE ____________ PIN ____________

☐ YES... I would like to receive **TATTVĀLOKA** magazine for myself:

☐ 1 Year; ☐ 2 years. ☐ New ☐ Renewal

NAME ____________________

ADDRESS ____________________

____

CITY ____________ COUNTRY ____________ ZIP ____________

Please enclose cheque/draft for Rs. 115/- (US$25 for overseas airmail) for each year's subscription payable to: **TATTVĀLOKA.**

Mail to: **TATTVĀLOKA, 125-A, MITTAL COURT,**
NARIMAN POINT, BOMBAY 400 021, INDIA.

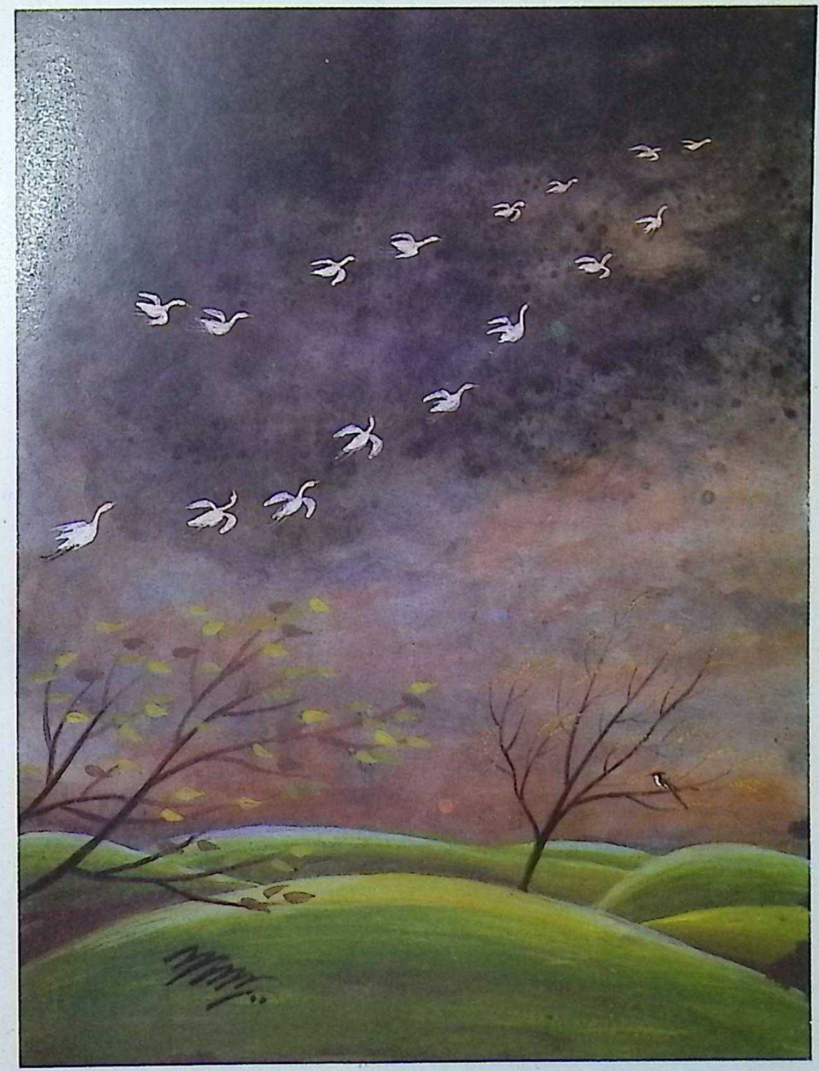
ECON POLLUTION CONTROL PVT. LTD.

(RECOGNISED BY UNEP, WORLD BANK ADB)

CONSULTANCY SERVICES

- ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITS
- ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING
- ENVIRONMENTAL ENGG. DESIGN
- IMPACT ASSESSMENT
- DISPERSION MODELLING
- GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
- HAZARDOUS/SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
- RISK ASSESSMENT/DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLANS

14/25, UNIQUE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,
V.S. MARG PRABHADEVI, BOMBAY-25
Tel.: 437 53 63



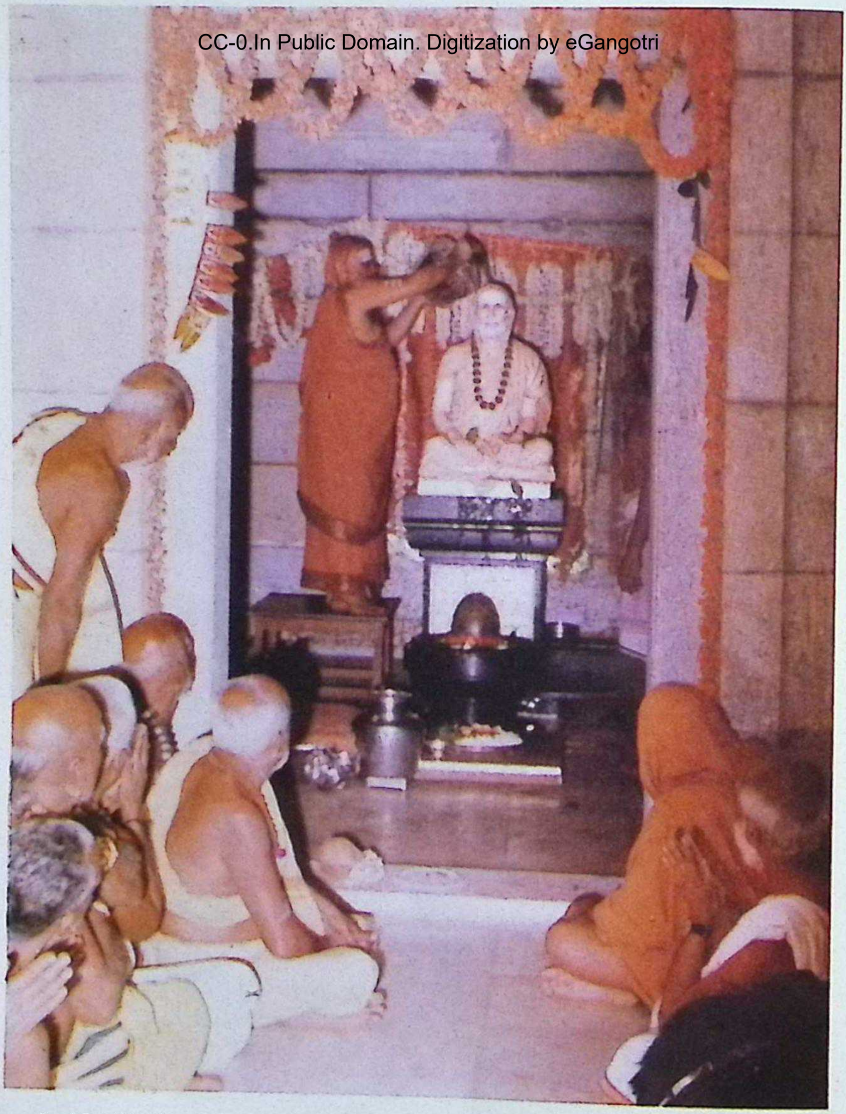
Unity of man and nature, a painting based on Meghaduta.

COURTESY: CENTRALIX LIMITED, MOHANS ENTERPRISES,
Ho Lee Commercial Building, 38-44, D' Aguilar Street, Hong Kong
Tel: 868 0603. Fax: (852) 810-6901.

ARAD PEETHAM SR
ENDS P

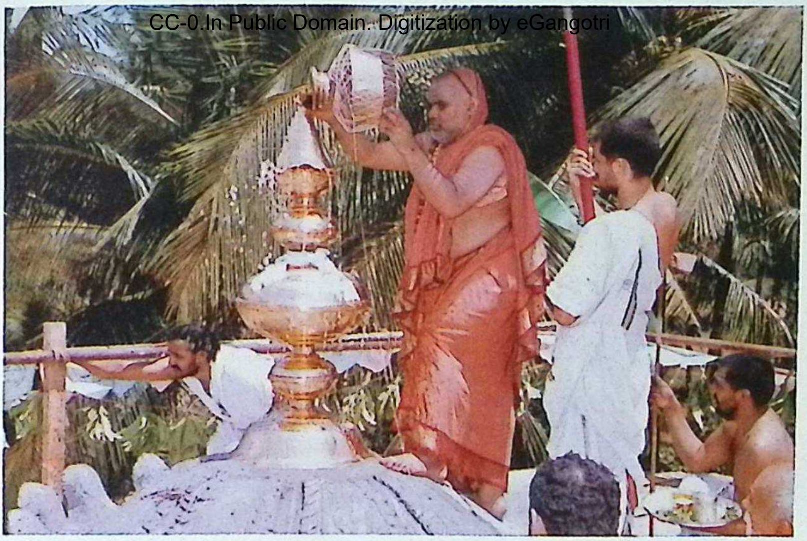
Above: Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, President of India, was felicitated by His Holiness with the title of Rashtra Ratnam when he visited Sringeri to inaugurate the new guest house, Sharada Krupa. Below: Musician Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan was conferred the title Nadasudha Varshi during the kumbhabhishekam celebrations at Sringeri.

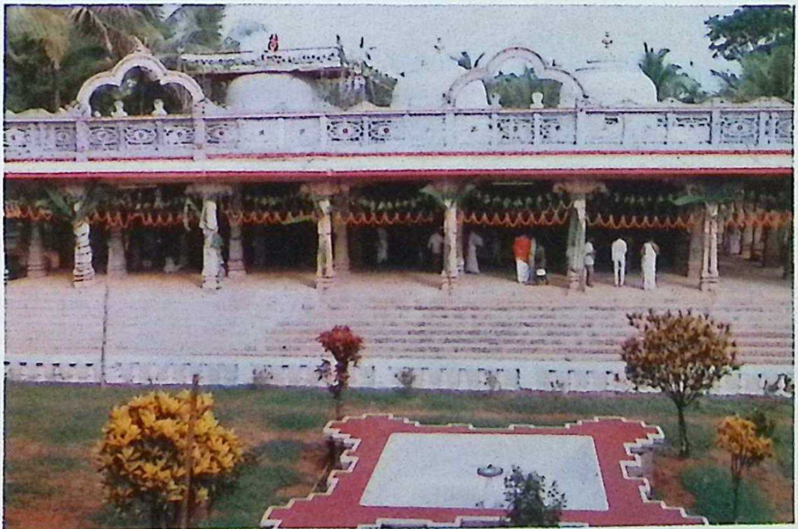
Above: Artist Rajkumar Bharati was conferred the title of Sangeeta Sudhakara during kumbhabhishekam celebrations at Sringeri. Below: Administrator of Sringeri Math Sri V. R. Gowrishankar received blessings from His Holiness for his special efforts in making kumbhabhishekam a grand success at Sringeri.



Amidst Vedic chanting H.H. Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal performed kumbhabhishekam to the marble statue of his guru, Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal, at the newly constructed adhisthan at Narasimhavanam, Sringeri.

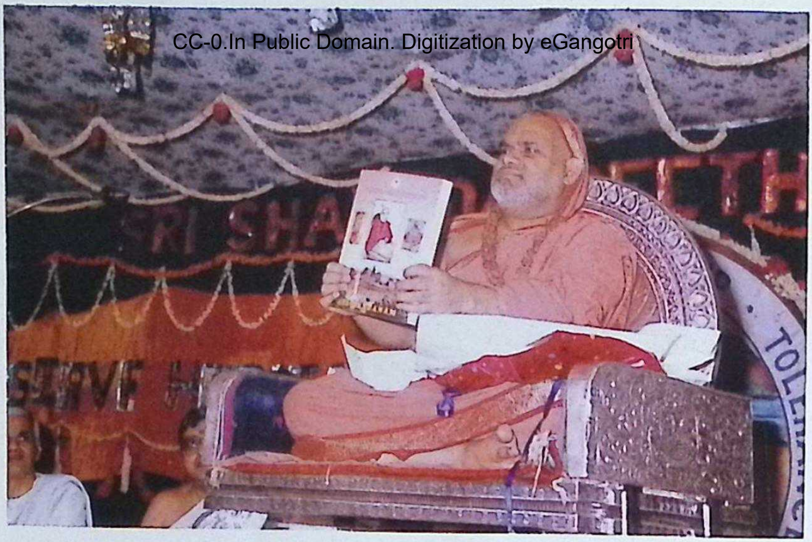
COURTESY: GLORY PRODUCTS CO., LTD., *G. P. O. Box 1700, Hong Kong. Fax: (852) 541 6810, 546 4607, Tel: 543 5267-9.*





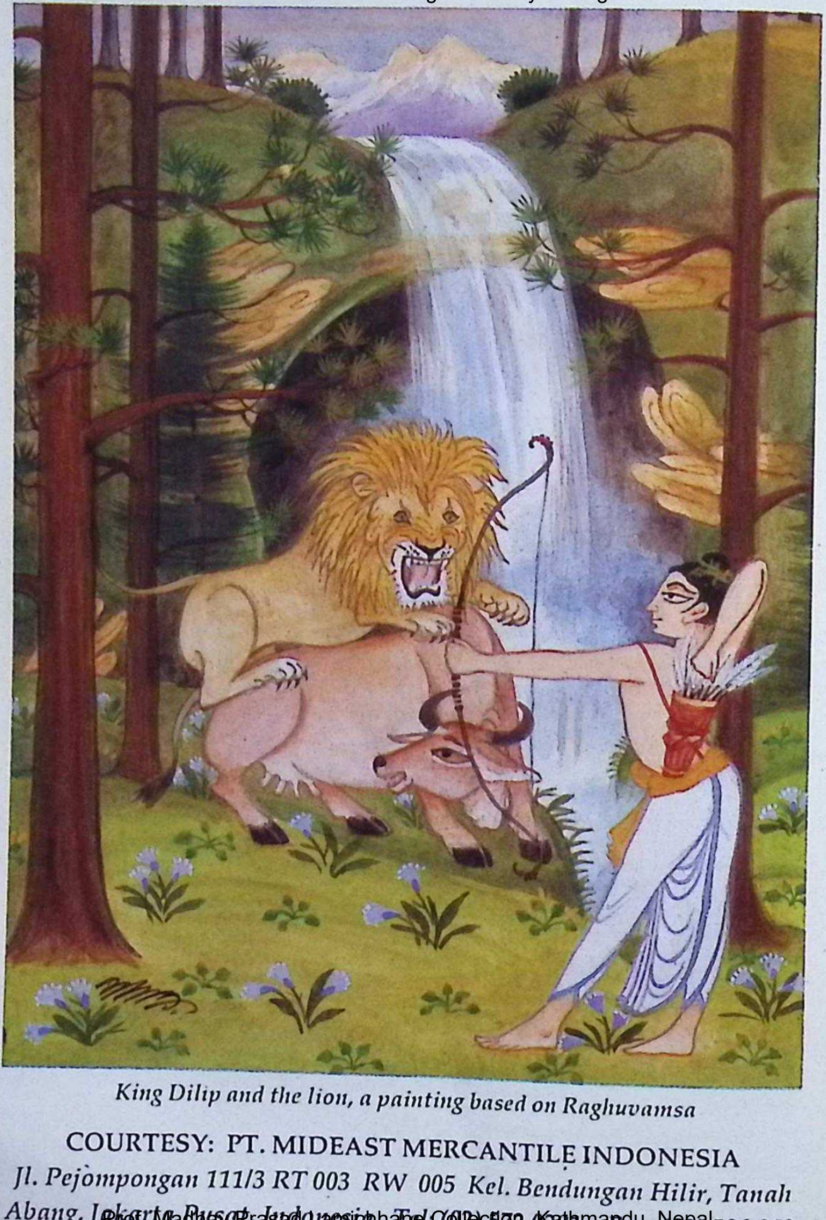
Above: H.H. Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamgal performing kumbhabhishekam to the gopuram of his guru's mandir. Below: The new adhisthan is seen at extreme left.

COURTESY: M. ARUNACHALAM, DIRECTOR, POLMACO (HK) LTD., 902, China Building, 29 Queen's Road C, Hong Kong. Fax: (852) 838 0142.



A two-week festival was held at Sringeri (May 1-14) to celebrate the kumbhabhishekams of Sarada temple and of the adhistanam of H.H. Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal. Above: A colourful commemoration souvenir was released by H.H. Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal. Below: The palanquin utsava at Sringeri, May 13.

Jagadguru Sankaracharyas (left to right) of Puri, Sringeri, and Dwaraka/Badri, together with the Sankaracharya of Kanchi Math met at Sringeri recently, chalked out a common programme concerning the Ramajanmabhoomi temple and issued a joint declaration for national harmony. Above: Their Holinesses of Sringeri and Dwaraka in a discussion.



King Dilip and the lion, a painting based on Raghuvamsa

COURTESY: PT. MIDEAST MERCANTILE INDONESIA
Jl. Pejompongan 111/3 RT 003 RW 005 Kel. Bendungan Hilir, Tanah Abang, Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia. Tel: (02) 572 0281. Fax: (02) 586 869.

Part Four

News and Events

Unanimous Call by Sankaracharyas

The incidents in the last few months linked with the Ramajanmabhoomi temple issue or the attacks and bomb blasts in various places have left every believer in *Sanatana dharma* to sit back and seriously introspect about the prevailing state of affairs.

His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji of *Dakshinamnaya* Sri Sringeri Sarada Peetham, perturbed by these happenings, realised that not much time was left and some action was required. A first and most important step of a summit meeting of Sankaracharyas was organised at Sringeri, the seat of Goddess Sarada--Goddess of learning--and the seat of *Dakshinamnaya* Sri Sarada Peetham established by Sri Adi Sankaracharya.

This meeting helped the exchange of views between the Sankaracharyas--the most respected leaders of the Hindu community--and chalked out a common thought and programme for national harmony.

His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha of Sri Sarada Peetham, Sringeri, His Holiness Swami Swarupananda of Dwaraka and Badrinath *Mathas*, His Holiness Swami Nischalananda of Puri *Matha* and His Holiness Sri Jayendra Sarasvati of Kanchi Kamakoti *Matha* participated in this summit meeting.

✱

The following is the text of the joint declaration made in Sringeri on June 27, 1993 by the four Sankaracharyas:

Sri Adi Sankara Bhagavad- padacharya, incarnation of Lord Paramashiva; took birth at Kalady to revive the *Sanatana dharma*--the eternal law--and preached the Advaita philosophy touring in all the directions of our country. He appealed to everyone to restore and foster the ideals of *dharma* and spirituality of this great land which alone would secure the well-being of humanity.

There are many points with regard to the date and life of Sri Adi Sankara that we are not in agreement. However, we do not want to discuss these issues now. We also direct our devotees not to give room for discussion on these issues in future. We deem it right to have discussion on other subjects where we have unanimity. Keeping in mind the prevailing situation in the country and the need to give a unanimous call and direction to all believers in *Sanatana dharma*, we all give this joint declaration:

Sanatana dharma does not date from a particular point of time or begin from a particular founder. Being eternal, it is also universal. It knows no territorial jurisdiction. All beings born belong to it. All religious and spiritual paths are but aspects of *Sanatana dharma*. The highest teachings of any other religion do find a place in our religion and are but a phase of the law laid down here. Its validity and value remain unchanged whether all accept it or none accept it.

Dharma is the cause of happiness. If today we do not have the mental peace and happiness, it is due to our gross neglect of *dharma*. When the practice of *dharma* declines, suffering begins. We can, at any moment, put an end to it by reverting to the simple faith and the upright conduct, the religious fervour and the peaceful contentment of our ancestors.

The future of the land is really in the hands of the people in power. They should set by their example, a standard of right conduct. The rulers should maintain an attitude of perfect non- interference in religious matters and at the same time safeguard perfect religious autonomy among the citizens. There must be perfect religious equality--each man to his religion. No one has the right to interfere in the spiritual matters of another.

All religious conflicts and quarrels arise because a devotee is unable to disassociate his conception of God from a particular name and form. If one realises that all gods are one and all paths lead to God, he will never waste his precious time in religious quarrel.

No religion can possibly live, much less thrive, if its adherents are handicapped in its practice. The only way a religion can be safeguarded is by strengthening the hands of those who are entrusted with the duty of guiding the followers.

Every believer in *Sanatana dharma* fervently wishes that a grand Rama temple should be built at the birth place of Sri Rama at Ayodhya. The temple issue has remained embroiled in litigation for several decades and there have also been unseemly incidents at the holy spot at Ayodhya and other places and this has created unnecessary tension and ill-will among people. We have given this matter deep consideration and thought and find that it is possible to meet the religious aspirations of all followers of *Sanatana dharma* consistent with the law of the land.

In the above background, it is possible to evolve an amicable solution and commence planning and construction of the Rama temple in accordance with the *sastras* if all political parties eschew utilising this issue for political purposes. At the same time, all those who are interested in early construction of the temple at Ayodhya, including *Mandaleshwars*, saints, *Mahants* and other religious bodies, should ensure that they do not become unwitting tools in the hands of political activists. The situation as it stands today can be best resolved by consensus evolved by religious leaders who are apolitical.

Correspondingly, the land acquired by the Government at Ayodhya should be entrusted to a group of persons who are above politics and command popular respect throughout the country for construction of a temple for Sri Rama.

We appeal to all right thinking people in the country to come forward and assist and cooperate in maintaining peace, harmony and mutual faith and solve the burning problem in a true national spirit.

We declare that:

a) All Sankaracharyas will work in unison for the maintenance of peace in the country and for welfare of all its citizens.

b) We will take up for implementation projects for sustenance and propagation of *Sanatana dharma* and the rich values of our age-old tradition in its true spirit.

c) All political parties and bodies agree that the construction, upkeep, etc., of the temple at Ayodhya be left to a suitable body.

e) The body should be constituted of apolitical, religious leaders whose eminence and independence are transparent and that the Central Government handover the acquired land for temple construction to this body.

All Sankaracharyas make known the decision that they intend exchanging views frequently from now on to continue efforts for finding solutions on issues that are to be faced from time to time. Sri V. R. Gowrishankar will act as the coordinator and keep in touch to appraise us of the various developments and for implementation of our wishes.

1. Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Mathadhipati.
2. Paschimamnaya and Uttaramnaya--Dwaraka and Badrinath Mathadhipati.
3. Poorvamnaya Puri Mathadhipati.
4. Kanchi Mathadhipati.

The following is the Sanskrit text of the joint declaration made in Sringeri by the four Sankaracharyas (whose translation in English appears above).

सनातनधर्मस्य पुनरुज्जीवनाय कृतावताराः परशिवावतारभूताः श्रीमदादिशंकरभगवत्पादाचार्याः सर्वत्र सञ्चर्य अद्वैतसिद्धान्तं प्रचार्य सर्वेषामपि लोकानां धर्म्येण पथा प्रवर्तनमेव श्रेयोनिदानमिति समुपादिशन्।

भगवत्पादाना कालविषये चरित्रविषये च सन्त्यस्माकं मतभेदाः। परन्तु तानत्र चर्चितुं वयं नेच्छामः। अस्मच्छिष्यलोकानपि तादृश चर्चाणामवकाश इतःपरं न

country and the need to give a unanimous call and direction to all believers in *Sanatana dharma*, we all give this joint declaration:

Sanatana dharma does not date from a particular point of time or begin from a particular founder. Being eternal, it is also universal. It knows no territorial jurisdiction. All beings born belong to it. All religious and spiritual paths are but aspects of *Sanatana dharma*. The highest teachings of any other religion do find a place in our religion and are but a phase of the law laid down here. Its validity and value remain unchanged whether all accept it or none accept it.

Dharma is the cause of happiness. If today we do not have the mental peace and happiness, it is due to our gross neglect of *dharma*. When the practice of *dharma* declines, suffering begins. We can, at any moment, put an end to it by reverting to the simple faith and the upright conduct, the religious fervour and the peaceful contentment of our ancestors.

The future of the land is really in the hands of the people in power. They should set by their example, a standard of right conduct. The rulers should maintain an attitude of perfect non- interference in religious matters and at the same time safeguard perfect religious autonomy among the citizens. There must be perfect religious equality--each man to his religion. No one has the right to interfere in the spiritual matters of another.

All religious conflicts and quarrels arise because a devotee is unable to disassociate his conception of God from a particular name and form. If one realises that all gods are one and all paths lead to God, he will never waste his precious time in religious quarrel.

No religion can possibly live, much less thrive, if its adherents are handicapped in its practice. The only way a religion can be safeguarded is by strengthening the hands of those who are entrusted with the duty of guiding the followers.

Every believer in *Sanatana dharma* fervently wishes that a grand Rama temple should be built at the birth place of Sri Rama at Ayodhya. The temple issue has remained embroiled in litigation for several decades and there have also been unseemly incidents at the holy spot at Ayodhya and other places and this has created unnecessary tension and ill-will among people. We have given this matter deep consideration and thought and find that it is possible to meet the religious aspirations of all followers of *Sanatana dharma* consistent with the law of the land.

In the above background, it is possible to evolve an amicable solution and commence planning and construction of the Rama temple in accordance with the *sastras* if all political parties eschew utilising this issue for political purposes. At the same time, all those who are interested in early construction of the temple at Ayodhya, including *Mandaleshwars*, saints, *Mahants* and other religious bodies, should ensure that they do not become unwitting tools in the hands of political activists. The situation as it stands today can be best resolved by consensus evolved by religious leaders who are apolitical.

Correspondingly, the land acquired by the Government at Ayodhya should be entrusted to a group of persons who are above politics and command popular respect throughout the country for construction of a temple for Sri Rama.

We appeal to all right thinking people in the country to come forward and assist and cooperate in maintaining peace, harmony and mutual faith and solve the burning problem in a true national spirit.

We declare that:

a) All Sankaracharyas will work in unison for the maintenance of peace in the country and for welfare of all its citizens.

b) We will take up for implementation projects for sustenance and propagation of *Sanatana dharma* and the rich values of our age-old tradition in its true spirit.

c) All political parties and bodies agree that the construction, upkeep, etc., of the temple at Ayodhya be left to a suitable body.

e) The body should be constituted of apolitical, religious leaders whose eminence and independence are transparent and that the Central Government handover the acquired land for temple construction to this body.

All Sankaracharyas make known the decision that they intend exchanging views frequently from now on to continue efforts for finding solutions on issues that are to be faced from time to time. Sri V. R. Gowrishankar will act as the coordinator and keep in touch to appraise us of the various developments and for implementation of our wishes.

1. *Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Mathadhipati.*
2. *Paschimamnaya and Uttaramnaya--Dwaraka and Badrinath Mathadhipati.*
3. *Poorvamnaya Puri Mathadhipati.*
4. *Kanchi Mathadhipati.*

The following is the Sanskrit text of the joint declaration made in Sringeri by the four Sankaracharyas (whose translation in English appears above).

सनातनधर्मस्य पुनरुज्जीवनाय कृतावताराः परशिवावतारभूताः श्रीमदादिशंकरभगवत्पादाचार्याः सर्वत्र सञ्चर्य अद्वैतसिद्धान्तं प्रचार्य सर्वेषामपि लोकानां धर्म्येण पथा प्रवर्तनमेव श्रेयोनिदानमिति समुपादिशन्।

भगवत्पादाना कालविषये चरित्रविषये च सन्त्यस्माकं मतभेदाः। परन्तु तानत्र चर्चितुं वयं नेच्छामः। अस्मच्छिष्यलोकानपि तादृश चर्चाणामवकाश इतःपरं न

Prof. Madhav Prasad Laṃichhane Collection, Kathmandu, Nepal

देय इति आदिशामः। परन्तु सन्ति बहवो विषया यत्र समेषां नस्सम्प्रतिपत्तिर्विद्यते। अद्यतनीं देशस्य परिस्थितिं सनातनधर्मावलम्बिनां आस्माकीन सर्वसम्मतनिर्देशावश्यकतां च मनसिकृत्य वयमिमां संयुक्तघोषणां प्रकटीकुर्मः।

सनातनधर्मोयमनादिः। नास्य कश्चन पुरुषःप्रवर्तकः। सनातनत्वादेवायं विश्वजनीनोपि। नास्य कश्चन दैशिकोऽवधिर्विद्यते। सर्वोपि जन्तुः जन्मत एव तदनुयायी भवति। सर्वाण्यपि मतानि सर्वेपि पन्थानः तस्य निकटवर्तिन एव। यस्य कस्यापि मतस्य परमोपदेशा अत्र स्थानं लभन्ते। ते चात्रत्यायाः धर्मसंहिताया एकदेशा एव। अत एवास्य प्रामाणिकता गरिमा च लोकानामंगीकारमनवलम्ब्य निष्कम्पा वरीवर्ति।

श्रेयसो मूलं धर्मः। अद्य लोकाः मानसिकीं शान्तिं सुखं च यन्नानुभवन्ति तत्र हेतुः धर्मे उपेक्षाबुद्धिरेव। यदा धर्मो नानुष्ठीयते तदा दुःखपरम्परा प्रवर्तते। सर्वेपीमां अनर्थमूलभूतां धर्मपराङ्मुखतां संत्यज्य सविश्वासं अस्मत्पूर्वजैराचरितमिमं धर्मं अनुष्ठाय सुखं शान्तिं च लभेरन्।

देशस्यास्य भवितव्यता परिपालकाधीना विद्यते। लोकानां सच्चारित्रस्य ते आदर्शतां प्रपद्येरन्। मतसम्बन्धिषु विषयेषु ते हस्तक्षेपं सर्वात्मना अकृत्वा धर्मसंहितायाः परिरक्षणं विदधतु। सर्वेपि जनाः स्वंस्वं धर्ममनुतिष्ठन्तस्समाना एव। अन्यस्य धर्मविषये हस्तक्षेपं विधातुमधिकारः कस्यापि न स्यात्। सर्वेपि भगवन्तं केनचिन्नाम्ना केनचिद्रूपेण च भजन्ते। ते नामान्तरेण रूपान्तरेण च भगवतः उपास्तिमसहमानाः कलहायन्ते। एक एव परमात्मा विविधैर्नामभी रूपैश्च उपास्यत इति तत्त्वं यदि लोका अवबुध्येरन् तदा तादृश निष्फलकलहाय स्वीयममूल्यं कालं न व्यर्थतया विनियुञ्जीरन्। धर्मस्य अनुयायिनः यदि सत्वहीनाः क्रियेरन् तदा स धर्मः नैव उच्छ्वसितुं जीवितुं वा शक्नुयात्। धर्मोपदेशकानां परिरक्षणेन प्रोत्साहनेनैव धर्मस्य परिरक्षणं भवेत्।

सर्वेपि सनातनधर्मावलम्बिनः अयोध्यायां रामजन्मभूमौ भव्यं बृहदाकारं राममन्दिरं निर्मातव्यमिति अतितरां समीहन्ते। बहोःकालात् विवादग्रस्तमिमं विषयं पुरस्कृत्य अयोध्यायां पुण्यभूमौ अन्यत्र च बहवः अनर्थाः संजाताः। तेन संक्षोभः जनानां

मध्ये समुत्पन्नः। वयमिमं विषयं सुदीर्घं समालोच्य इदमभिप्रेमः यत् एतद्देशीय धर्मसंहितानुसरणेनैव सर्वेषामपि सनातनधर्मानुयायिनां पवित्राणां आशयानां परिरक्षणं भवेत्।

ईदृश्यां स्थितौ स्वप्रयोजनार्थमिमां समस्यां उपयुञ्जानाः राजकीयपक्षाः यदि दूरे वर्तेरन्, यदि च ये खलु मण्डलेश्वराः सन्तःमहान्तः धर्माचार्याश्च क्षिप्रमेव तत्र रामालयनिर्माणमभीप्सन्ते ते राजकीयपक्षीयाणामधीना न भवेयुः, तदैव इमां समस्यां सुचारुरूपेण परिष्कर्तुं तत्र शास्त्रानुसारेण रामालयनिर्माणाय योजनाः विधातुं च शक्यते। ये खलु धर्माचार्याः राजकीयपक्षेभ्यः सर्वथा दूरे वर्तन्ते त एवाधुना वर्तमानां स्थितिं समीकर्तुं पारयन्ति। अतः अयोध्यायां सर्वकारेण स्वायत्तीकृता भूमिः रामालयनिर्माणस्य कृते लोकानां विशिष्टादरपात्राणां राजकीयेभ्यः दूरे वसतां पुरुषाणां हस्ते प्रदेया। तैः तस्याः समभिवृद्धिः निर्वाहश्च क्रियेत।

अस्मिन् देशे वर्तमानाः विवेकिनःपुरुषाः पुरतःसमागत्य शान्तिं सौहार्दं परस्परविश्वासं च परिरक्षितुं ज्वलन्तीमिमां समस्यां परिष्कर्तुं च साह्यं विदधत्विति वयमावेदयामः।

वयमधुना इत्थमाघोषयामः

१. सर्वेपि शंकराचार्याः देशे शान्तिपरिरक्षणाय लोकक्षेमाय च मिलित्वा प्रयतिष्यामहे।

२. सनातनधर्मपरिरक्षणाय प्रचाराय प्राचीनपरम्परां च परिरक्षितुं योजनाः विधास्यामः।

३. राजकीयपक्षाः तत्सम्बद्धाः संस्थाश्च कस्यापि धर्मस्य मतस्य वा सम्बद्धेषु विषयेषु न प्रविशन्तु-तेभ्यो दूरे वसन्तु।

४. अयोध्यायां रामालयनिर्माणं तत्परिपालनं च राजकीयैरसम्बद्धानां व्यक्तीनां समितेःअधीनं विधातुं सर्वैरपि राजकीयपक्षैःतत्सम्बद्धाभिस्संस्थाभिःच अंगीकर्तव्यम्।

५. प्रायुक्तायां समितौ तादृशा एव धर्माचार्याःतिष्ठेयुः ये चारित्रेण पाण्डित्येन च लोकानां महतो गौरवस्य पात्रतां प्रपन्नास्सन्ति। केन्द्रसर्वकारः प्रसक्तां भूमिं तस्यै समित्यै समर्पयतु।

सर्वेपि शंकराचार्याः इत्थमेव तदा तदा प्रसज्यमानानां समस्यानां परिहारोपायानन्वेष्टुं

विचार विनिमयं विधास्यामः। विषयेस्मिन् अस्माभिस्सह सम्पर्कं विधाय अस्मदाशयान् कार्यगतान् विधातुं कार्यनिर्वाहकत्वेन वे रा गौरीशंकरःव्यवंहरिष्यतीत्यावेदयामः।

शृङ्गगिरिः
श्रीमुखवत्सरीय आषाढ शुक्ल अष्टमी
भानुवासरः २७-६-१९९३

भारती तीर्थः
दक्षिणाम्नाय शृंगेरी मठाधीशाः

स्वरूपानन्द सरस्वती
पश्चिमाम्नाय द्वारका मठाधीशाः

स्वरूपानन्द सरस्वती
उत्तराम्नाय ज्यातिर्मठाधीशाः

निश्चलानन्द सरस्वती
पूर्वाम्नाय पुरी मठाधीशाः

श्रीजयेन्द्र सरस्वती
काञ्ची मठाधीशाः

Kumbhabhishekams at Sringeri

The first fortnight of May 1993 witnessed a magnificent spectacle at Sri Sarada *Peetham*, Sringeri. The occasion was *kumbhabhishekam* of Sri Saradamba temple and *kumbhabhishekam* of the granite *adhisthanam* of the 35th pontiff of Sri Sarada *Peetham*, His Holiness Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswami.

The colourful/festival was celebrated from May 1 to 14. The main functions of both *kumbhabhishekams* were celebrated on May 12 with due Vedic rituals.

As part of the celebrations, a *Sahasra Modaka Ganapati homa*, a *Sahasra Chandi yaga*, an *Atirudra yaga* and a *Veda Samhita yaga* were performed by learned Vedic scholars, invited for the purpose from all over the country.

There was also a cultural fete in which celebrated artists gave their performances. His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswami blessed the artists with his benign presence on the dais everyday and conferred suitable titles on the well-deserving artists. Sri V. R.

Gowrishankar, the Administrator of the *Math* and the moving spirit behind the entire celebrations, introduced the artists to Swamiji and the audience. A citation in Sanskrit and a *Rudraksha mala* were also presented to the artists.

1. *Dr. M. Balamuralikrishna--Sangeeta Samrat.*
2. *Dr. Sheikh Chinna Moulana--Nadaswara Visharada.*
3. *Sri Kadri Gopalnath--Sangeeta Kalanidhi.*
4. *Sri Narasimhalu Wadvati--Sangeeta Kalanidhi.*
5. *Sri Anup Jalota--Gayan Gandharva.*
6. *Sri R. K. Srinivasa Murthy--Vainika Sikamani.*
7. *Smt. Kishori Amonkar--Gayan Sarasvati.*
8. *Sri Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan--Nadasudha Varshi.*
9. *Sri V. Rajkumar Bharati--Sangeeta Sudhakara.*
10. *Sri Sheni Gopalakrishna Bhat--Yakshagana Kalanidhi.*
11. *Smt. Sudha Raghunathan--Sangeeta Sarasvati.*
12. *Dr. N. Ramani--Venunada Visharada.*
13. *Sri Umayalapuram Shivaraman--Mridanga Kalanidhi.*

Earlier, on the evening of May 1, the marble statue of Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswami was taken in a procession led by His Holiness Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswami through the main road of Sringeri. Scores of devotees from the neighbouring villages took part in the procession.

The idol of His Holiness Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswami is a life-size replica in marble, exquisitely carved and brought from Jaipur, adorned fully with spectacles and *Rudraksha mala*.

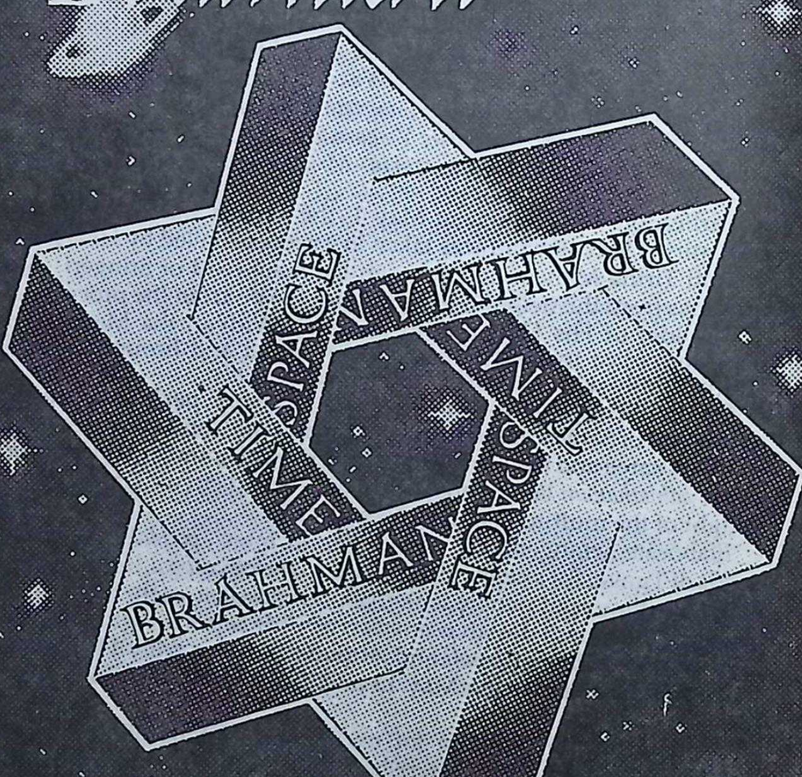
On the *Kumbhabhishekam* day, His Holiness performed *panchamrita abhishekam* of Sarada, shorn of all ornaments and appurtenances, except the pure silk saree and the *mangalsutra*. This spectacle and the *kumbhabhishekam* of the *adhisthanam* later were shown on a closed circuit T.V. system, to the delight of the multitude of devotees.

Elaborate arrangements were made in huge *pandals*, erected on the sands of Tunga, for *prasada* distribution to the devotees. It is estimated that some five thousand people took the food *prasadam* each day.

The festival ended with *poornahuti* of *Veda Samhita yaga* on May 13 and *poornahuti* of *Sahasra Chandi* and *Atirudra yagas* on May 14. To cap it all, there was a *Rathotsava* on May 13 and *Teppotsava* (river float festival) on May 14.

The dynamism and care for even minor details on the part of the Administrator Sri V. R. Gowrishankar were noticeable throughout the festival. His Holiness in appreciation of the services rendered on the occasion, conferred the title of *Guruseva Dhurina* on Sri Gowrishankar.

The space-time Brahman


BRAHMAN
TIME
SPACE
BRAHMAN
TIME
SPACE

This is perhaps how a 'Modern Vedantin' would describe Brahman. But what's the connection between space-time and Brahman?

Says Louis De Broglie :

"In space-time, everything which for each of us constitutes the past, the present and the future, is given en bloc... Each observer, as his time passes, discovers, so to speak, new slices of space-time which appear to him as successive aspects of the material world, though in reality the ensemble of events constituting space-time exist prior to his knowledge of them"

Says Svetasvatara Upanishad :

... Universe is a union of the manifest and the unmanifest; the temporal and the eternal... when the soul realizes this divine unity, it is freed from every tie. And thereby does it attain release.

See the similarity? Modern physics unifies space and time into a four-dimensional continuum, in which an event can stretch in any direction. This is as opposed to the everyday experience of viewing events as temporal sequences, in a succession of space-time sections.

And Vedanta shows the various forms of going beyond the ordinary experience of time and of freeing oneself from the chain of cause and effect. In understanding natural phenomena, Vedanta, like relativistic physics, has been a liberation from time.

Ramco Industries Limited
'Auras Corporate Centre', 98-A, Dr. Radhakrishnan
Road, Madras 600 004. P. B. No. 2949. Tel. 830 377.
Tlx: 041-6010 RIL IN. Fax: 91-44-830579.
Grams: BESTROOF.

Nobility of Women in Kalidasa

DR. S. PADMANABHAN

The ancient Indian society honoured women spiritually and ethically, as evidenced in both Vedic and classical literature.

Among the classical writers, Kalidasa--the great devotee of Kali--reigns supreme next only to Valmiki. His works clearly point out the supreme position and the prime honour accorded to women.

In depicting Sita, Kalidasa is at his best. Bharata, after saluting Rama on his successful return from the exile, honours Sita. Here Kalidasa says: "The head of Bharata, the locks of hair which had become matted following severe austerities for the sake of his brother, and the venerable feet of Janaki which had a firm vow in declining the request of the Lord of Lanka--both became mutually sanctified." (*Raghuvamsa* VIII. 67)

Coming to know about the problem of acceptance of Sita by the people, Rama resolves to abandon her in the woods under the pretext of fulfilling her wish. Sita feels that her husband always fulfills her desire. But when she comes to know from Lakshmana that she was abandoned, though she was afflicted with grief, she does not speak ill of her husband, but only condemns her ill luck. (*Raghuvamsa* XIV. 56)

Lakshmana seeks her pardon. Sita, after conveying her obeisance to her mothers-in-law, says that she would perform penance with a view to obtaining Rama as her husband even in the next birth, without separation. She also makes a request to Rama through Lakshmana that she must be protected by the king Rama not as a wife but as a subject.

Character of Sakuntala

This indeed is the culture of our women! A similar instance is from the *Abhijnanasakuntalam*. When Sakuntala comes to the place of king Dusyanta, who under the power of a curse could not recognise her, he treats her as a stranger. Sakuntala is shocked, yet she addresses him in noble terms.

Sage Kanva, on the departure of Sakuntala to her husband's home, had advised her as to how a bride should conduct herself. "Serve your elders, and be affectionate like a friend to your co-wives; do not retaliate to your husband in anger. Young women thus attain the status of an ideal housewife and those who act contrary are a curse to that family."

Our ancient society, preferred a woman to be with her husband whether loved by him or not. Saradvata advises king Dusyanta: "This is your wife. Accept her or decline her. A man attains real status only when he has obtained authority over a wife." He proceeds to say that servitude in the husband's family is preferable to her present status. Later, when the king realises his mistake, he prostrates before Sakuntala who readily grants pardon and only blames her misfortune.

More Instances

More instances could be given with regard to the ideal womanhood depicted by Kalidasa. For the sake of brevity only a few are mentioned.

In the *Vikramorvasiya*, the queen becomes furious when she comes to know about her husband's love for Urvasi, but later feels sorry and shows her generosity by admitting it.

At the sight of Arundhati, a chaste lady, Lord Siva's desire to have a wife became stronger, for good wives are the source of religious rites. When the Lord requested the seven sages to speak on his behalf to Himavan, he asked them to take Arundhati with them because women are more competent in such matters *(Kumarasa-. mbhava* 6-13, 32)

In the opening stanza of the *Meghaduta*, Kalidasa says that a certain Yaksha dwelt in the Ramagiri, having a sacred pool, sanctified by the bath of the daughter of Janaka. The Yaksha's wife, in the absence of her husband, follows the rigid discipline of an ideal wife. She doesn't use any cosmetics and eagerly awaits the arrival of her husband, counting the days of his return

. Kalidasa again, referring to the *Ramayana* story, says: "She (the Yaksha's wife) with her face raised towards you will listen to you as Maithili did towards Hanuman. (*Meghaduta* II-37)

"A nation's level is judged by its treatment of its women and the place it assigns them in its religious, social and public activities. Judged by this test, the India of the Vedas, the epics and the *Smritis* will not show to disadvantage."

***Dr. S. Padmanabhan** is Lecturer, Department of Sanskrit, University of Madras, Madras.*

*

When father, mother, brother, friend, followers, house, wife, body, sons, lands and money leave me and plunge me in a shameful darkness of delusion, O compassionate Mother! be present and bring me succour like soothing rays of the moon.

Kalidasa in Sakala Janani Stavam

Upama Kalidasasya

Dr. N. B. Patil

Similes of enduring interest abound in all Kalidasa's works. A few selections from his magnum opus Raghuvamsa are given here.

Great poets in the world have resorted to embellishments of all sorts to make their works of special appeal to sensitive and appreciative readers. Kalidasa is no exception. The excellence of Kalidasa, however, lies in his superb use of the figure of speech--*upama*, a figure of speech indicating similarity in different objects (*saadharmyam upama bhede*--Mammata). An anonymous Sanskrit poet has put this in a couplet:

Upama Kalidasasya, Bharaveh artha gauravam,
Dandinah padalalityam, Maghe santi trayo gunah.

"Kalidasa excels in *Upama,* while Bharavi excels in pithiness. Dandi excels in the use of beautiful words. Magha has all the three."

It requires a sharp intellect and a sense of appreciation to discern similarity in apparently dissimilar things. What is important is that the similarity should be striking and it must elicit a spontaneous appreciation from the hearer or a reader. Kalidasa's works are full of similes and these have added grace and lucidity to his poetry.

The selection of Kalidasa's similes here makes no claim to be comprehensive nor even quintessential. It merely represents a few chosen at random, which happen to be utterly beautiful. A glimpse of them should be enough to urge the reader to go into his works.

Dwarf and Fruit

With great humility, Kalidasa states at the beginning of *Raghuvamsa* that he, a dullard, desiring the glory of a great poet would be a butt of ridicule, even as a dwarf tempted by a fruit at a considerable height on a tall tree, jumps with uplifted arms.

Mandah kaviyashah prarthi gamishyami upahaasyatam,
Pranshu labhye phale lobhad udbahuriva vaamanah. (1-3)

The simile here vividly brings before one's eyes a jumping dwarf trying to get a sweet fruit beyond his reach.

A similar account follows when he compares himself to a rowing boatsman anxious to row to the other end of a mighty ocean in a country raft.

Kva surya prabhavo vamshah kva chaalpa vishayaamatih,
Titeershuh dustaram mohaad udupenaasmi saagaram. (1-4)

A little further, Kalidasa describes *Vaivasvat Manu,* respected among the wise men. He says that Manu was first among kings as the *pranava* is the proto-sound among the *riks* of the Vedas.

Vaivasvato Manurnaama maananiyo maneeshinaam,
Aasit mahikshitaam aadyah pranavah chchandasaamiva. (1-11)

Animals and Jewels

While describing the grandeur of the king in the line of Raghu, Kalidasa says:

"The king had regal qualities, extremely pleasing and yet awe- inspiring to all those who depended on him. He was both unassailable and yet worth approaching, like an ocean containing dangerous aquatic animals as well as jewels."

Bheemkaantaih nrupagunaih sa babhuvopajivinaam,
Adhrushyaschadhigamyascha yadoratnairivaarnavah. (1-16)

At another place, Kalidasa says that even if you do not like a person, who is honoured by all, you should have him with you, like a medicine which is bitter. But a person who is wicked should be abandoned, though you may like him, just as one should cut asunder even his finger, if it is bitten by a serpent. (1-28)

Dveshyopi sammatah shishtastasyarthasya yathaushadham,
Tyajyo dushtah priyopyasid angulivorgakshataa. (1-28)

Lake and Fish

Kalidasa graphically describes the calm composure of *rishi* Vasishtha in a couplet. The sage, who was addressed by the king, closed his eyes in meditation for a moment and looked like a lake, where all the fish were sleeping as it were.

Iti vijnapito raajnya dhyanastimita lochanah,
Kshana matram rishistasthau suptameena iva hradah. (1-73)

The greatness of Aja is described by comparing him with the moon. Kalidasa says that there are kings in thousands. But the earth came to be called *Rajanvati*, i.e., one bearing a king, only because of king Aja. Even when there are a number of stars and planets shining at night, it is called *Jyotishmati* (the shining one) only on account of the moon.

Kaamam nrupah santu sahasrashonye rajanvatimahuranena bhumim,
Nakshatra taara graha sankulaapi jyotishmati chandramsaiva raatrih. (6-22)

Tree and Mountain

In the eighth canto of *Raghuvamsa*, we find Aja, giving vent to his sorrow at the sudden death of Indumati, his consort. Kalidasa in his poetic way advises the king that he is not expected to be carried away by emotion.

While making his point he says, "O king, the greatest one among the subduers, you are not supposed to succumb to sorrow like an ordinary person. What would be the difference between a tree and a mountain if both would quiver under a blowing wind?"

Na pruthag janavachshucho vasham vashinaam uttama gantumarhasi,
Drumasaanumataam kimanantaram yadi vayau dvitayepi te chalah. (8-90).

All these similes indicate Kalidasa's keen observation of objects around him and his deep insight into the human mind. Great poets are masterminds who can portray even the slightest emotional ripple that may arise. Their greatness lies in making these emotions exquisite in words. Kalidasa is therefore honoured as *Kavi-kula-guru*, not only in India but also in the world.

***Dr. N. B. Patil** is retired Director of Languages, Government of Mahashtra, Bombay*

*

Pholosophy of Life

Kalidasa's works show that he had made a deep study of the different systems of philosophy. He is certainly an Advaitin, but regards Siva as his special deity for worship. He, however, is not indifferent to other gods as he describes both Vishnu and Brahma with great fervour.

He knows thoroughly the *Sankhya* system; he frequently refers to *Purusha, Prakriti,* the three *gunas (sattva,rajas,*and *tamas)* and uses the *Sankhya* system accurately and intelligently. He has a special admiration for the *Yoga* tenets as well. He believes in the efficacy of *bhakti* and has great admiration for the *Bhagavad Gita* from which he has evolved his philosophy of life.

(Extracted from R. D. Karmarkar's "Kalidasa".)

Divinity of Nature in Kalidasa

DR. MEERA SHARMA

In all his plays, Kalidasa handles nature dexterously and with feeling. He gives life to his works by apt use of nature in poetic creation.

Kalidasa handles nạture variously to suit his different purposes. At times, he uses it as an embellishment to his style, especially in similes. He also describes nature for its own sake dwelling on its sublimity, sympathetic response, supernal beauty and its sheer nobility. He often uses personification to enhance the beauty of his diction. While changing a topic, he introduces nature either to set the tone or to provide a buffer.

He uses pathetic fallacy very frequently to bring out the hapless state of suffering characters and their mute dependence on nature. Nature takes up divine qualities and responds outright to human suffering, often unexpectedly. Kalidasa's nature is true to life, striking, sublime, intimate, soothing and elevating. He never portrays the sordid or cruel aspect of nature. While destiny is often depicted as cruel, nature is always benign.

A special characteristic of Kalidasa's style is his way of mingling nature inextricably in a simile a situation or a feeling. If one takes out the element of nature from his verse, the portrayal ceases to make sense. Nature is used in an inevitable organic way, not as a mere exterior embellishment. By a direct description of nature, he brings out an actual picture before us often without the aid of characters.

Kalidasa often describes nature for the sheer joy of it. Most of his works are permeated by his aesthetic sense of natural beauty. In *Raghuvamsa*, the description of Dilipa's travel to hermitage through the forest, though short, is picturesque and sublime.

The advent of spring described in *Kumarasambhava* also exhibits genuine appreciation of nature. The description of the Himalayas should be taken as portrayal of nature as well as a character sketch, since Himavan is also *devatatma* and the father of Parvati, possessing human qualities.

In *Ritusamhara*, each season is described splendidly with the proper assonance and metre suited to each

Prof. Madhav Prasad Lamsal Collection, Kathmandu, Nepal

mood. There are geographical descriptions in Indumati's *svayamvara*, which are short, exact, selective and picturesque. The description of the ocean and the confluence of Ganga and Yamuna by Rama while coming back to Ayodhya in an aerial flight is apt and evocative.

Depiction of Living Nature

For description of animals in natural habitat, the forests afford examples. The example of the deer in *Abhijnanasakuntalam* is well-known. The example of Nandi in Himalayas, too, is very striking.

In *Ritusamhara*, Kalidasa describes how due to extremes of heat, animals forget their natural enmity and assist each other. Due to common suffering, they ignore each other or at times even help each other.

He also describes in detail how each season affects different animals and plants. In *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, we see Dusyanta's spirit of nature conservation. He shows genuine affection and concern when he holds that all animals should enjoy peacefully their natural habitat. We thus observe Kalidasa's natural compassion for wild life.

In some personifications, Kalidasa goes even to the extent of attributing all human emotions to inert objects. This poetic device however is common in Sanskrit. While using nature for thematic portrayal, he often employs pathetic fallacy, especially in *viraha* or *vipralambha* situations. At times, nature is described to have direct effect on the mentality of the characters.

In the treatment of nature, Kalidasa evokes several *rasas* in a striking form. We experience sublimity, when the poet makes the reader perceive the *ananda* aspect of Brahman in nature working effortlessly. There is *santarasa* in the atmosphere of a hermitage. In spring, one enjoys the portrayal of *sambhoga sringara*. During the departure of Sakuntala the whole forest mourns, affording *soka*. The excruciating pain of *viraha* and *vipralamba* is often portrayed by the rainy season and the participation of nature in the affliction of characters.

Effect of Seasons

The effect of seasons, especially that of spring and rainy season, is portrayed in *Kumarasambhava*, *Meghaduta* and *Ritusamhara*. Parvati in penance is hardened in mind and ignores the harsh changing seasons. One perceives Parvati's supreme indifference to her body and the cruel climate.

But in *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, Dusyanta remarks that a beautiful scenery evokes even in contented persons a desire for enjoyment. If the very look of a rainy cloud fills a man with a sense of well being, what then to say of a man separated from his beloved? The effect of rainy season on separated lovers has become proverbial.

In *Ritusamhara*, one is made aware of the direct effect of seasons on animals and men or, at times, even plants. Summer engenders langour, rainy season sadness for men but gladness for plants and animals. Autumn and winter enjoin intimacy and *sambhoga* for men. Spring again brings forth *sringara*. The perception of time also changes according to the character's moods. When happy it is quick, when separated it is endless.

Experience of Suffering

Not only does nature affect men, it also responds to their suffering, often exhibiting unexpected powers. Plants often participafe in a sorrowful situation. In *Raghuvamsa*, during Aja's lamentations on Indumati's untimely cruel death, even nature cries. In *Meghaduta*, the conception of the cloud delivering the message properly to the Yaksini is no doubt an unexpected help rendered by nature.

In *Raghuvamsa*, Sita was abandoned near Valmiki's hermitage while pregnant. The whole forest suffered, when she sobbed aloud desolately. But the sage comes to her rescue and takes her in his care. A sensitive sage, who cannot brook the misery of even a bird, will naturally care more intensely for a delicate and innocent person like Sita.

In *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, during Sakuntala's departure to the city, all her pet animals mourn and follow her. The deer, whom she had tenderly cared for when it was wounded, bars her path. The denizens of the forest are stunned in their action. They show their mute suffering.

Another feature of Kalidasa's way of *rasa* depiction, as mentioned earlier, is pathetic fallacy. One notable point is that while the human being is on the verge of madness, with occasional flashes of lucidity and a continuous thread of irrational logic, nature remains benignly neutral. Thankfully so, for if it were to respond, it will lead to a fix where the clearing of the lunacy becomes impossible. The calm sustaining influence of nature, remaining truly what it is, never aiding the sufferer in his illusion, is the factor which often draws the sufferer abruptly back to reality.

When man suffers without any hope in *viraha*, nature feels for him and responds with sympathy. When he is driven to the extreme of delirium in a *vipralamba* situation, it sustains him by staying neutral. The condition is cured of course only during reunion, but the non-participation of nature serves to bring back lucidity to the character.

By its general influence over men, nature incites, soothes or at times aggravates feelings in men. But being an aspect of the universal Godhead, ultimately by its sublime character, it always nourishes, sustains, soothes and consoles the sufferer provided he is lofty enough to draw sustenance from it.

Dr. Meera Sharma is Research Assistant, Department of Sanskrit, University of Madras, Madras.

Book Review

A Journey Within the Self (A Diary of Yogic Experiences) by *Deepa Kodikal.* Edited by Raja V. Kodikal. Published in 1992 by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay 400 007. Pp. xxii + 310. Price Rs 105/-.

A Journey Within the Self is a rare personal narrative which documents the spiritual unfoldment in an otherwise uneventful life of an uncommon housewife. It is seldom that we come across such accounts.

The unfoldment of Deepa Kodikal is unusual in a sense that she had no intention to be a traveller on the spiritual path. She was not initiated by a formal *guru,* and she apparently did nothing by way of penance. It is true that her husband followed his *sadguru,* but the latter did not initiate or interfere in Deepa's self-awakening, though he had recognised her ability. The awakening came to her naturally and without her hankering for it. She indeed became the recipient of divine grace.

Her experiences would have gone unrecorded, but for the persuassion of her husband Raja, who insisted on her writing them. The pages in her diary are an ascending graph of her spiritual progress. She does not claim to have come towards the end of her journey, but enjoys a sense of security on this lonely path.

Her spiritual unfolding commenced on Christmas eve in 1983, with an urge for meditation, amidst disturbances which slowly receded. She sensed and felt the aura of enchantment, tranquility and permanence (p.2).

As meditation stabilised, she felt the quickening of various *chakras* after automatically performing the *yogic mudras.* Some *mudras* are indeed difficult to perform and a novice would stumble at them. But these came somewhat naturally to her.

These experiences are graphically narrated in the book and it makes an exciting reading. For the convenience of the readers, the subject matter is explained under 67 headings, where the author's experiences range over topics such as man and God, inspiration and creativity, *Kundalini, Nirvikalpa Samadhi,* mind and body in spiritual evolution.

Her husband, Raja, deserves appreciation for standing as a witness to her spiritual progress, and for editing this volume. The language of the book is simple and clear and the arrangement of topics is appropriate. A glossary at the end is helpful in understanding some *yogic* terms. The readers should look forward to further notes from this unusual couple.

Dr. N.B. Patil

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Palani

Subrahmanya or Lord Muruga is the deity beloved of the people of south India, especially Tamil Nadu and Kerala; and Palani, the abode of Lord Muruga, is greatly revered by all. A pilgrimage is considered as a "must" by every family and many make an offering of the hair of their crown to the god at Palani as they do at Tirupati.

Bala Subrahmanya

One of the six important abodes of Lord Muruga, Palani enshrines him as Bala Subrahmanya, the child Muruga. The legend relating to the origin of the shrine says that once Lord Siva and Parvati found a rare fruit, which they showed to Ganesa and Muruga, mentioning it as the prize to be won by him who came first completing a round of the universe. Muruga at once set out on his peacock. Ganesa stayed back, performing a pradakshina or circumambulation round his parents. He explained that such a movement around the Adi Dampatis in whom the entire universe rests, was equivalent to going round the universe. Pleased with his wit, the parents gave away the prize to Ganesa.

When Muruga returned and found what happened, he got angry as is natural with a child who is deprived of a prize and went away to Siva Giri, which was near Palani.

Idumban's Feat

The great sage Agastya prayed to Lord Siva and got the divine couple to take abode on the two hills, Siva Giri and Sakti Giri. He took their leave to remove the hills to his own abode at Podikai hills.

He directed his disciple Idumban to carry the two hills on a kavadi (two baskets hung on ropes on either side of a stick) to Podikai hills. Idumban rested on his way at Palani, and it was here that Lord Muruga came and stationed himself on Siva Giri. Lord Siva appeased him by saying that as Muruga himself was the fruit, there is no need *for him to aspire for any other result.*

When Idumban lifted the kavadi after his rest, he found the basket with Siva Giri heavier, and upon enquiry found Subrahmanya on top, whom he challenged. Lord Muruga killed him, but later, upon the entreaties of Idumban's wife and sage Agastya, he restored him back to life. Idumban prayed to the Lord begging his forgiveness, and requested to be allowed to stay at the doorstep of Muruga's abode as guard. This legend is depicted at the Sakti *Giri temple where Idumban is seen praying to Lord Muruga.*

The Palani temple is situated on the Palani hill-top, at a height of 450 feet. The temple is not famous for architectural or archaeological value, but the shrine is revered for its great sanctity because of the healing grace of the deity.

Miraculous Powers of the Deity

The image looks as if made of wax and it is believed to be an alloy of nine different substances. The proportion in which these are mixed remains unknown, but any substance that comes into contact with the image is believed to acquire miraculous healing powers.

The deity is bathed daily in different substances, such as gingelly oil, rice powder, turmeric powder, panchamrutam, rose water, sandal paste and vibhuti. All these substances offered in abhisheka are received back as the Lord's prasadam having supernormal curative powers. The material of the image looks corroded and it is believed that in the ancient times the Siddha Vaidyas of the area scraped off substance of their medicines from the image.

A tunnel is seen at the shrine of Nava Durga in the southwest corridor in the inner quadrangle. Near it is the shrine of sage Bhoga, who is believed to have made the image of Lord Muruga. The tunnel in the sanctum of the Nava Durga temple is believed to be the one, into which the sage retired after he had completed the image and never returned. This tunnel is believed to lead into the sanctum of Dandayudapani as Lord Muruga is known at Palani.

Palani Panchamrutam

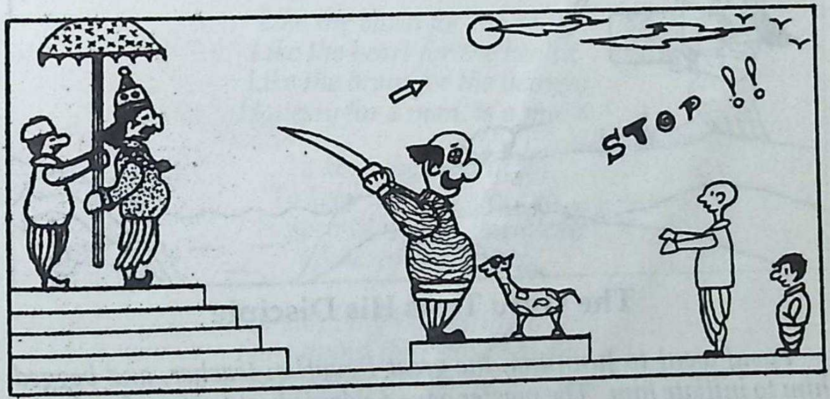
The main ingredient used for abhisheka is panchamrutam, made of plantains, ghee, honey, jaggery and sugar candy. Though such perishables as plantains are added, the panchamrutam does not get *putrified. This quality is said to be acquired by the panchamrutam by its coming into contact with the body of the icon.*

A noteworthy feature of the shrine is that it is sacred not only to the Hindus, but also to the Muslims. The Muslims worship Muruga in this temple as "Palani Baba", and offer prayers to him in the corridor at the back of the temple.

Harmonising Two Faiths

Thus stands the shrine of Muruga harmonising two faiths and establishing the supremacy of the divine as the one power. Muruga is the beloved lord of grace who relieves all kinds of sufferings and sorrows of devotees. Pilgrims from all over south India and even from other parts pour into the sacred town of Palani to worship Dandayudapani and get their lives sanctified.

(Courtesy: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, "Immortal India")



Selfless Love

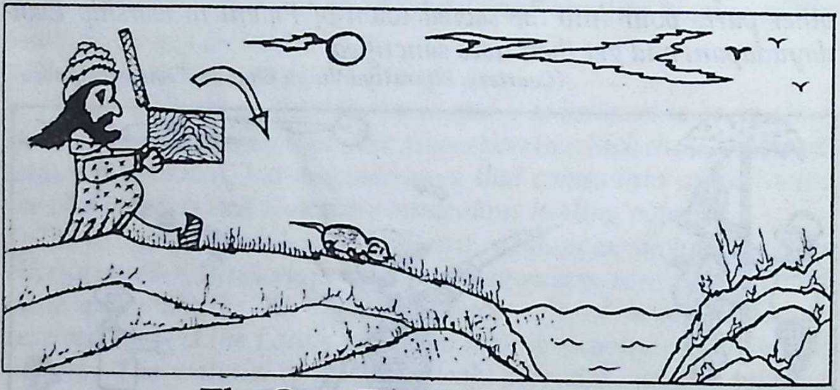
One day, when Buddha was in Rajagriha, taking a walk, he saw a herdsman driving a flock of goats and sheep with difficulty. Buddha asked him, "What is the matter?" The herdsman said, "There is in the herd a limping lamb. He finds it difficult to keep pace with the others." Affectionately, Buddha took the limping lamb on his shoulder and walked with the herd.

Then, Buddha asked the herdsman, "Why are you driving the herd in the heat of the midday sun?" The herdsman said, "I am asked to *give the king 100 goats and sheep for sacrifice in the Yajna, which takes place this evening." Buddha said, "I, too, shall go!"*

Soon they entered the city. They reached the place where sacrifices were to be made for the Yajna. The man in charge was about to strike the sword against the goat marked for sacrifice, when suddenly Buddha exclaimed, "Great king! Let not the man strike. Take my life as a sacrifice and spare the goat."

The words moved the heart of the king. The king forbade the sacrifice. And the very next day, he proclaimed a decree that none shall kill for sacrifice or private plesaure.

(Extract from the book, "Stories that Stir" by T. L. Vaswani)



The Guru Tests His Disciple

Yusuf went to Junnuna, the great Egyptian teacher, and begged him to initiate him. The master gave a closed chest to Yusuf and said, "Cross the river Nile. Go to the other side. There lives a disciple of mine. Give him this closed chest."

Yusuf started on his journey. Yusuf was curious to know what was in the chest. So he opened the chest. Out of the chest a rat ran out. Yusuf tried to catch it but the rat escaped.

Yusuf's heart was filled with sorrow. He had failed in his task. What should he do now, he wondered. Then he heard a voice from within, "Go onward with the empty chest". He went, until he reached the other side of the river. Yusuf met the master's disciple and gave him the empty chest.

This man was no ordinary man. He was a sage. He opened the chest and found it empty. He smiled and said, "Yusuf, your master in sending you here tested you, and you have failed in the test. In this chest was a rat and now the chest is empty. You could not take care of a little rat. How can the master trust you with the greatest treasure of the world--the secret of the Lord?"

(Reprinted from the book, "Stories that Stir" by T. L. Vaswani)

"A Must"

A. K. SARKAR

For a man, honesty is a must!
Not for anybody else
But for his ownself;
Honesty is a must!

Like the blood for the body,
Like the heart for the health,
Like the brain for the beings;
Honesty for a man, is a must!

To keep the head high,
To keep the eyes elegant,
To keep the hands harmless;
Honesty is a must!

For stopping the rolling tears,
For taming the rising temper,
For judging the limit of joy;
Honesty is a must!

The bequest of life to beseem,
The passage of life to be perfect,
The departure from world to be delightful;
Honesty for a man, is a must!

(Reprinted from "Balarangam", published by Sri T. V. N. Swamy)

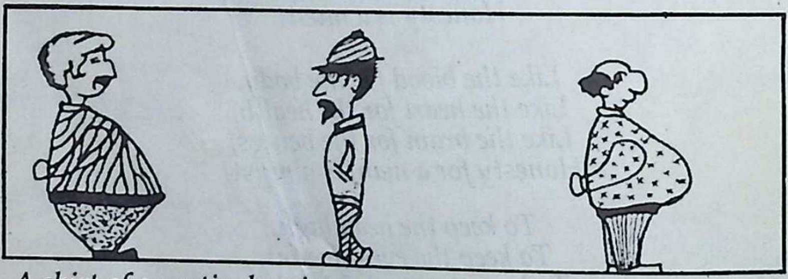
Sarada Devi is All-powerful

A short time before His Holiness Sacchidananda Sivabhinava

Narasimha Bharati (33rd pontiff) returned to Sringeri in March 1911, a fire had destroyed the shrine of Sarada which was made of timber. But the murti within was not affected. Even the flower garlands had not withered. Commenting on the miraculous event, the Acharya sang the following verse extempore:

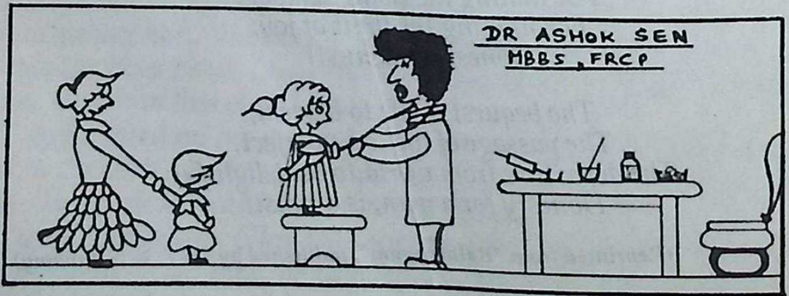
"The Kena Upanishad has sung that Agni, Vayu and the other gods presiding over the elements of nature are powerless before the supreme light from whom they derive power. What wonder then that the murti of Sarada was unscathed, her garlands and drapery intact when flames licked the enclosing wooden walls!"

Golden Words



A shirt of a particular size cannot fit everybody.

Similarly, different dharmas have been prescribed for people of varied competence.

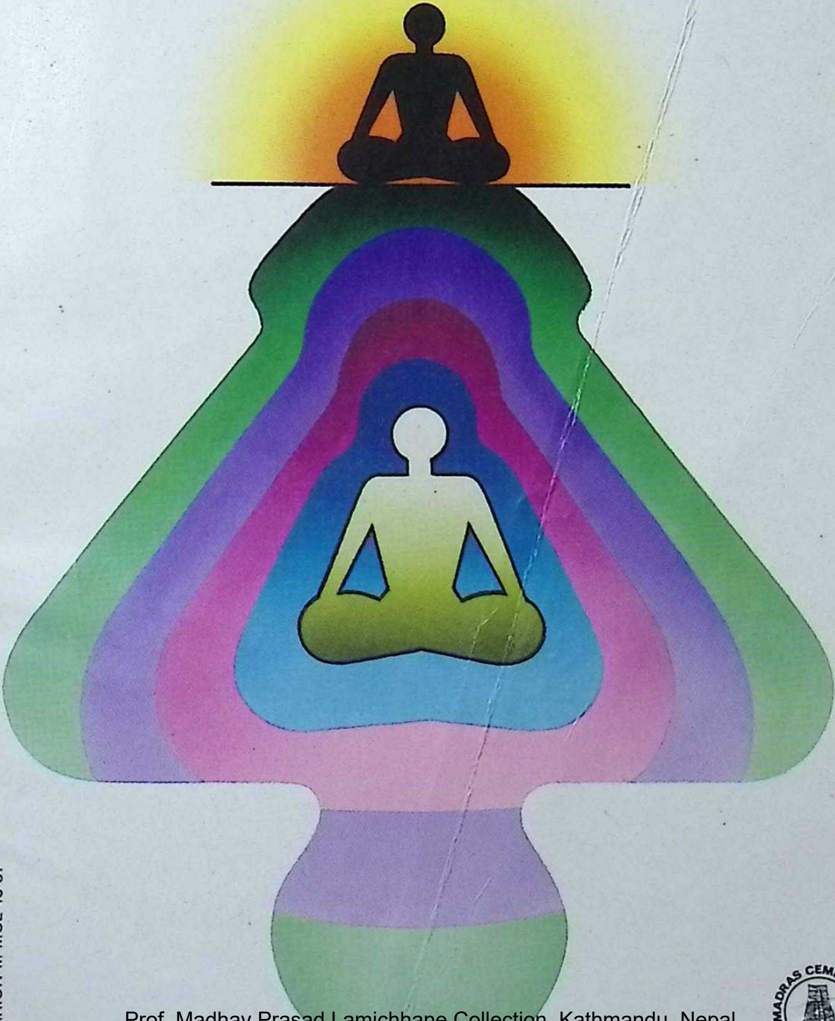


Just as a doctor is necessary for one affected by a disease, a guru is necessary for removing the disease of ignorance.

H.H. Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal

REFLECTIONS ON THE SELF & SOUL

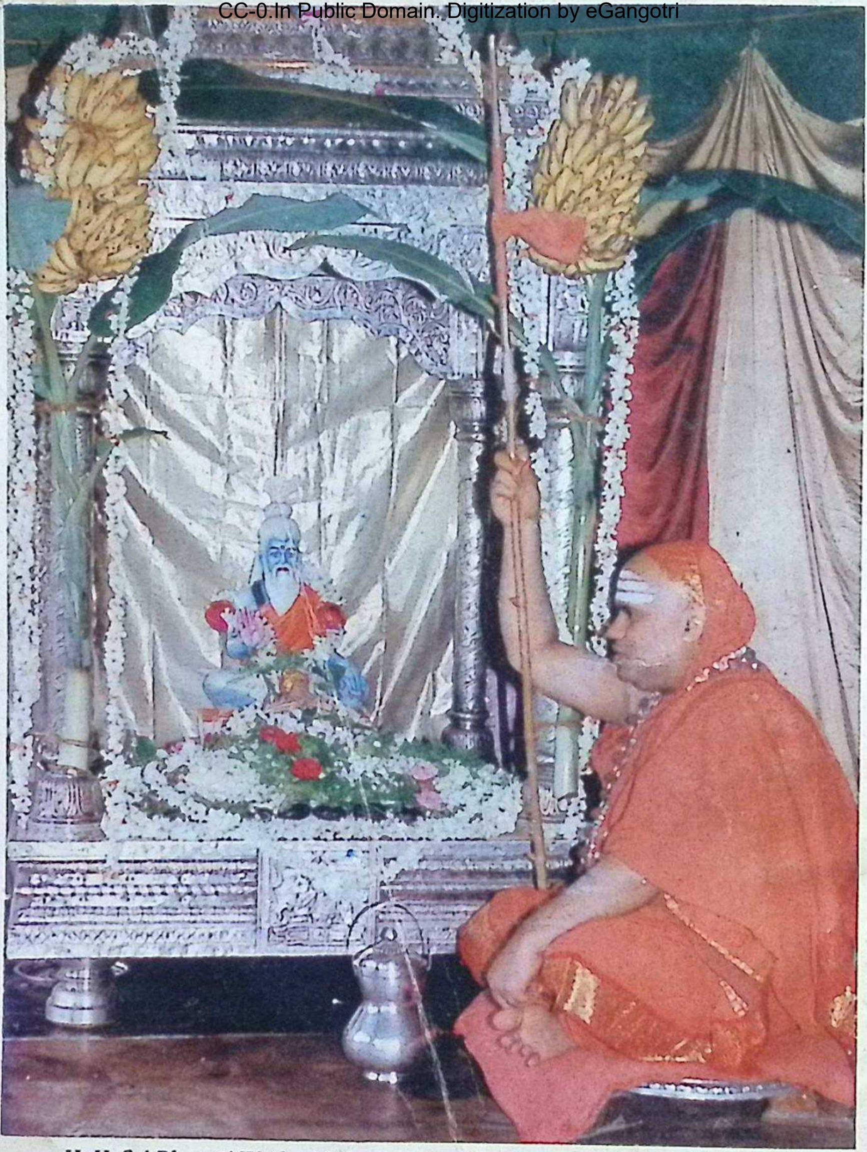
The wise should surrender speech in mind. Mind in the knowing self. The knowing self in the spirit of the universe. And the spirit of the universe in the spirit of peace.



CLARION-M-MCL-43-87

MADRAS CEMENTS LTD
RAMCO CEMENT
MADRAS CEMENTS LIMITED

Regd. No. RN 30492/78



H. H. Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal performing Vyasa puja at Sringeri

COURTESY: INFOCOM INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING, INC.
1 Ethel Road, Suite 107 B, Edison, NJ 08817 U. S. A.
Tel: 908-248-3363. Fax: 908-248-1751